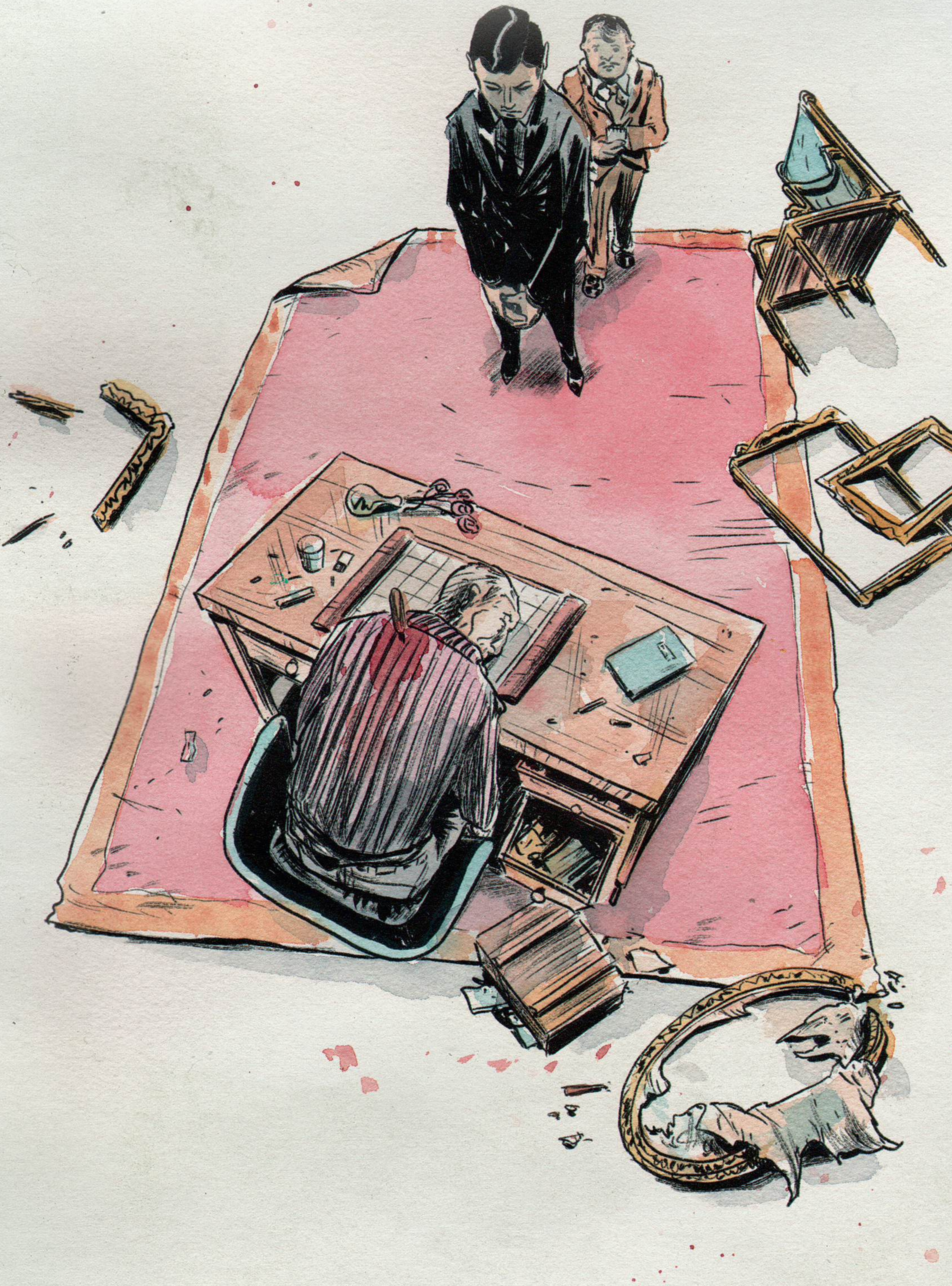
GILT FRAME™

Margie
Kraft
Kindt

Matt
Kindt

GILT
FRAME™



GILT FRAME™

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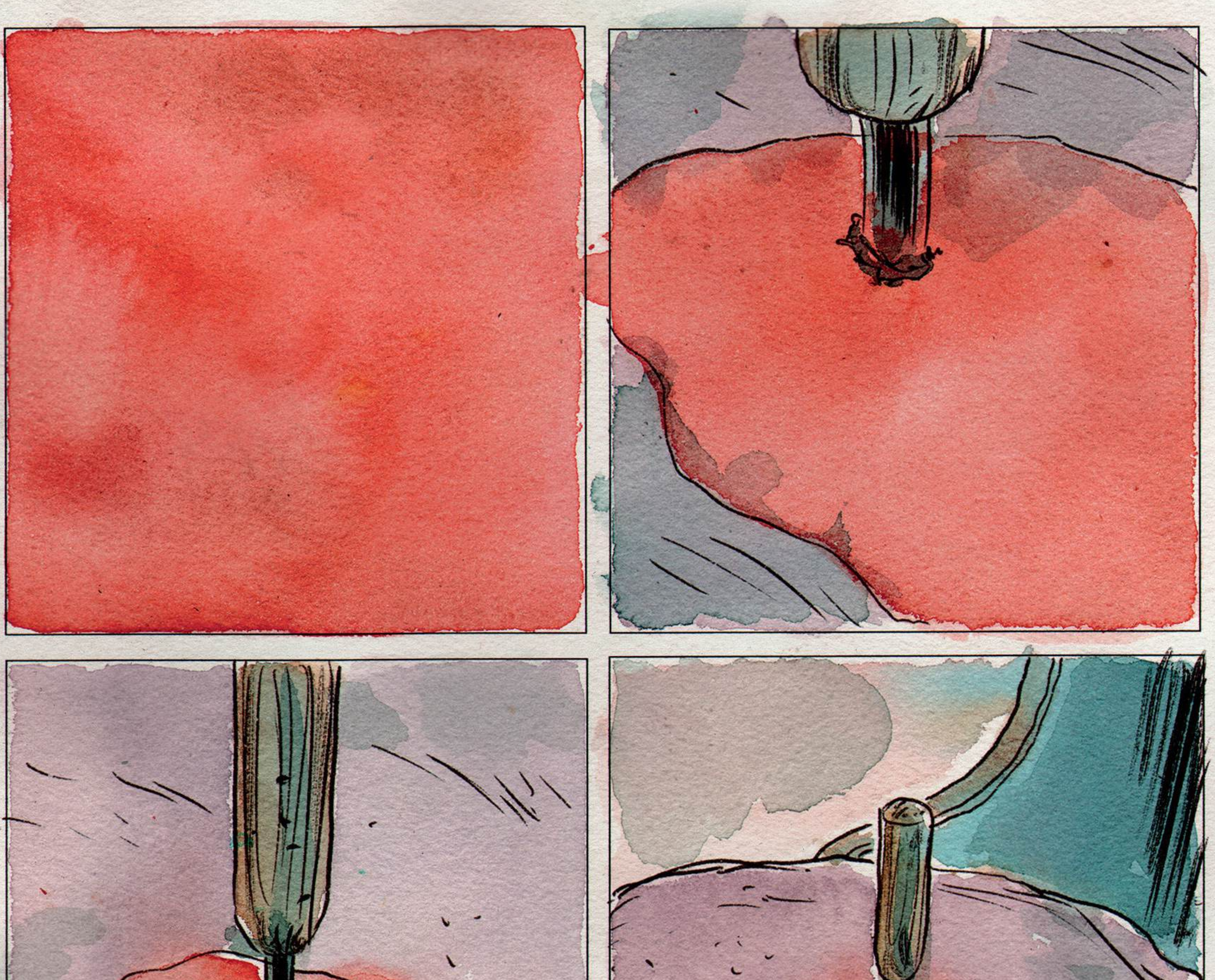
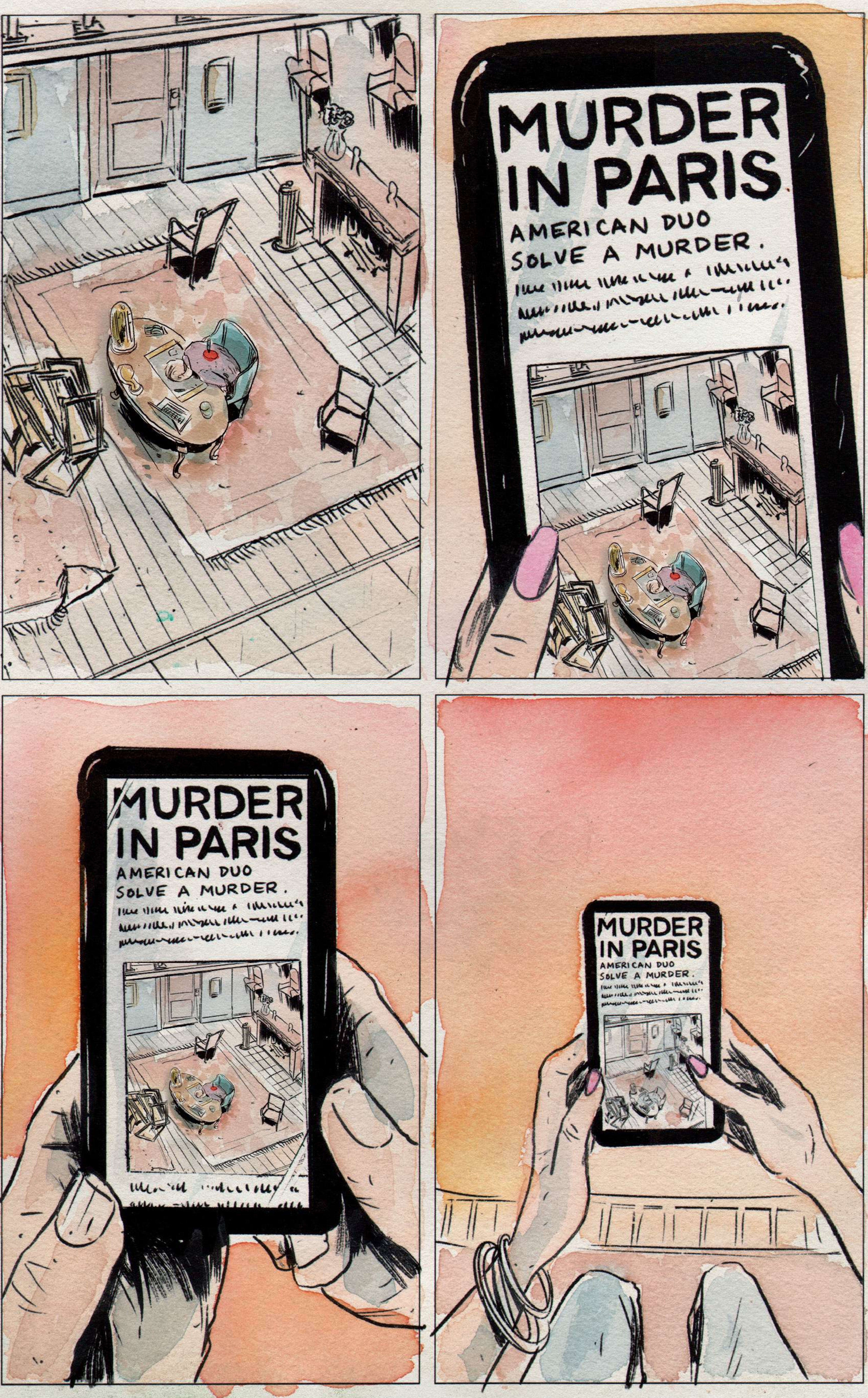
One




MURDER IN PARIS
AMERICAN DUO SOLVE A MURDER.
MURDER IN PARIS
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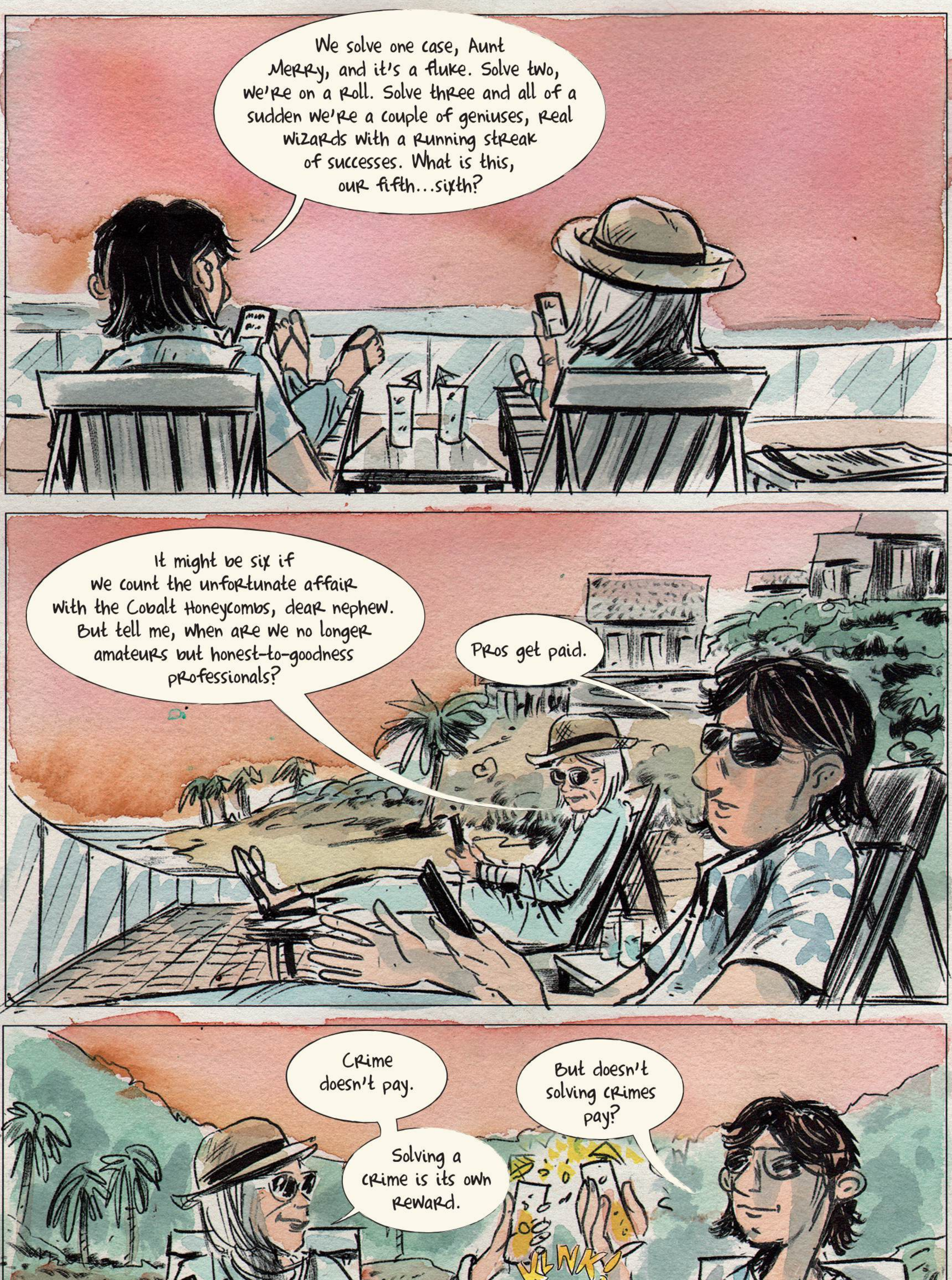
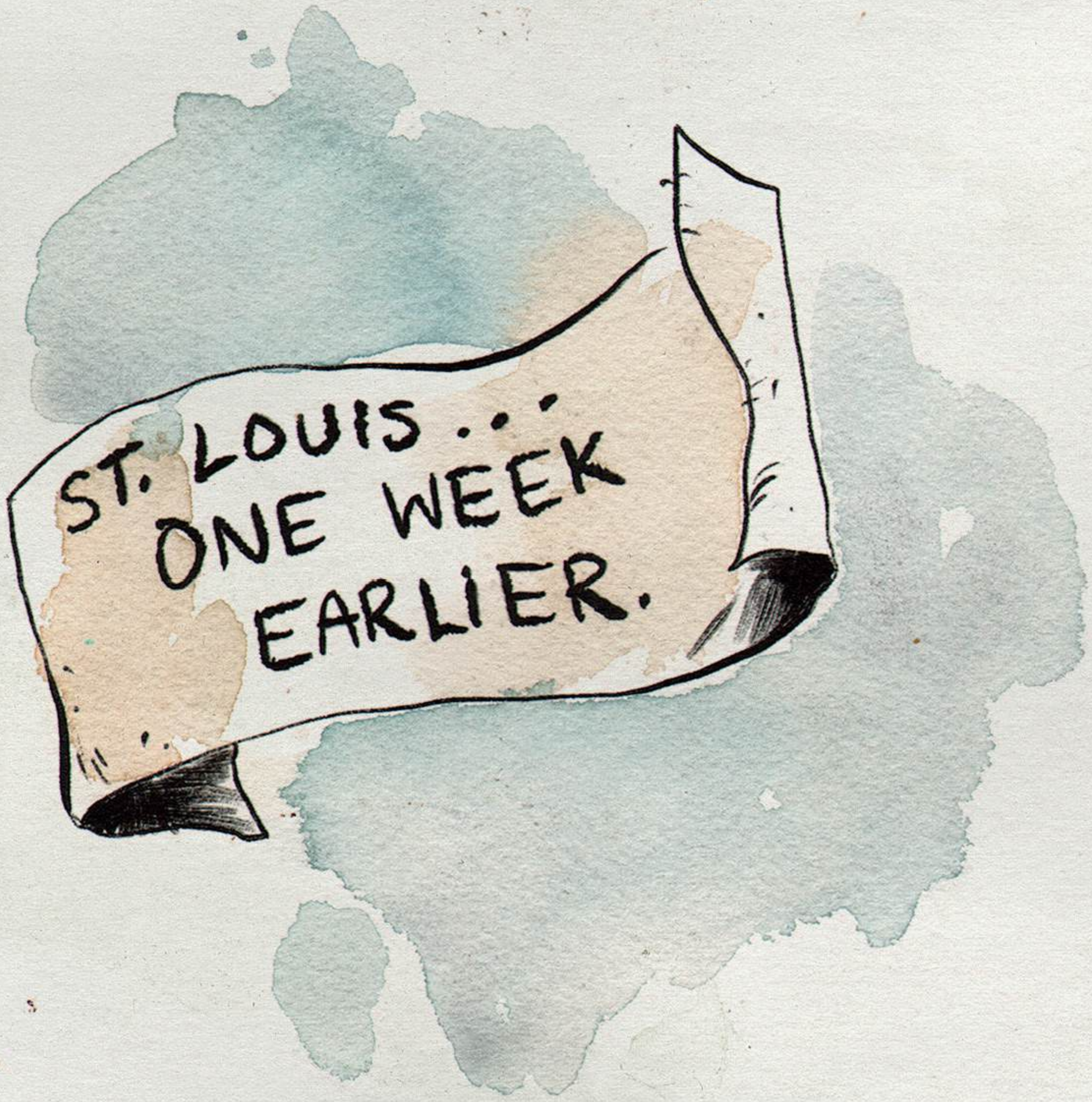
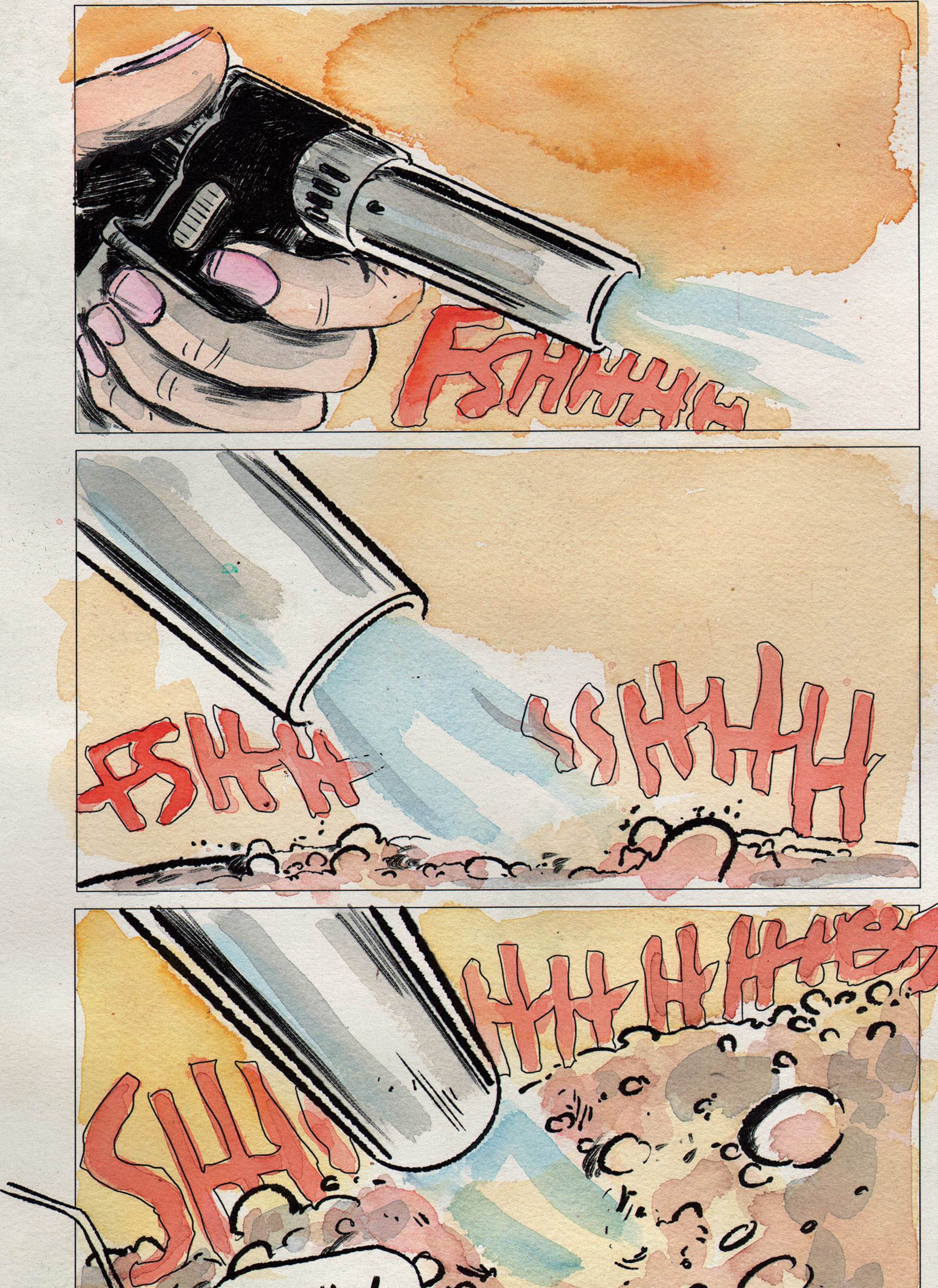
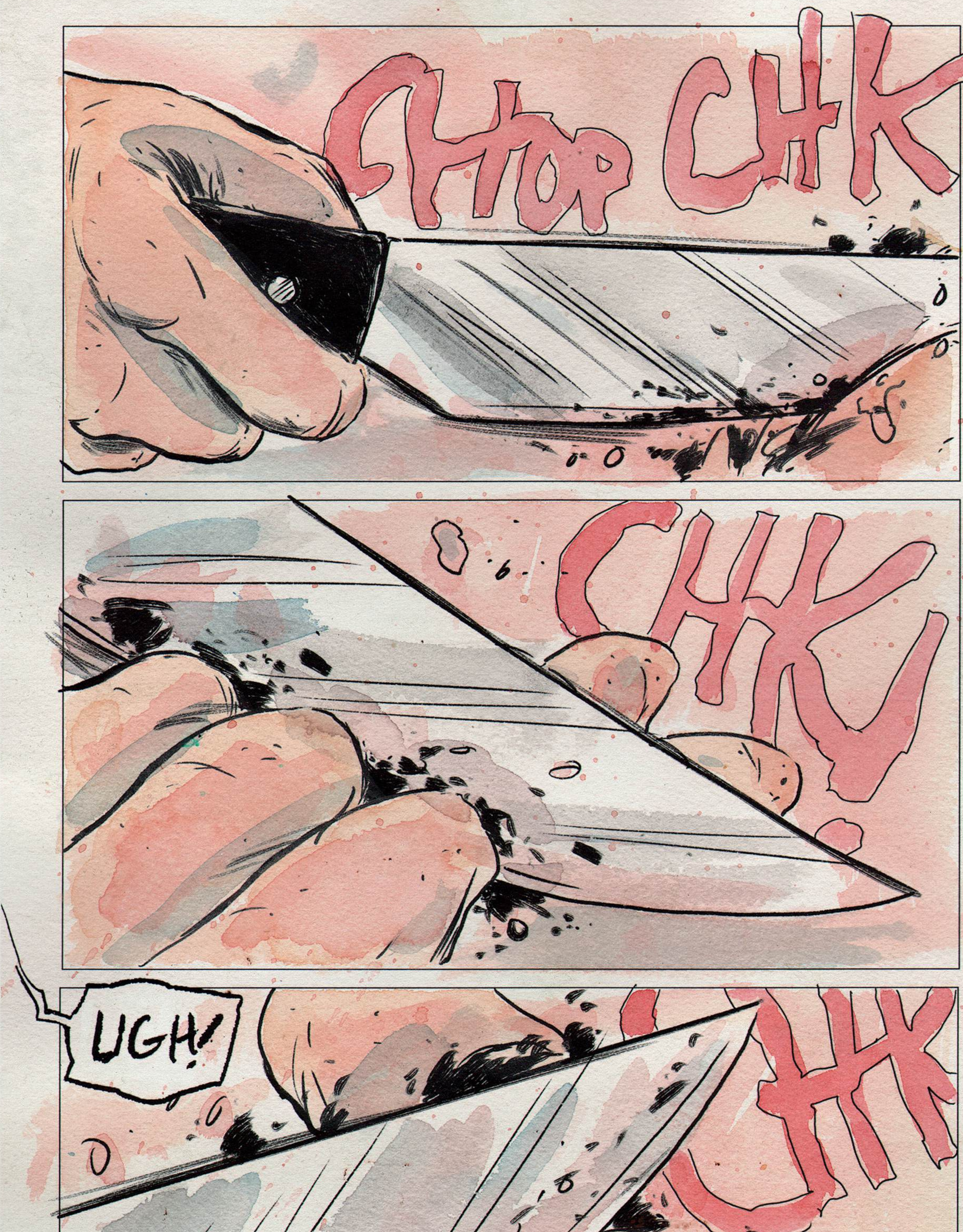
MURDER IN PARIS
AMERICAN DUO SOLVE A MURDER.

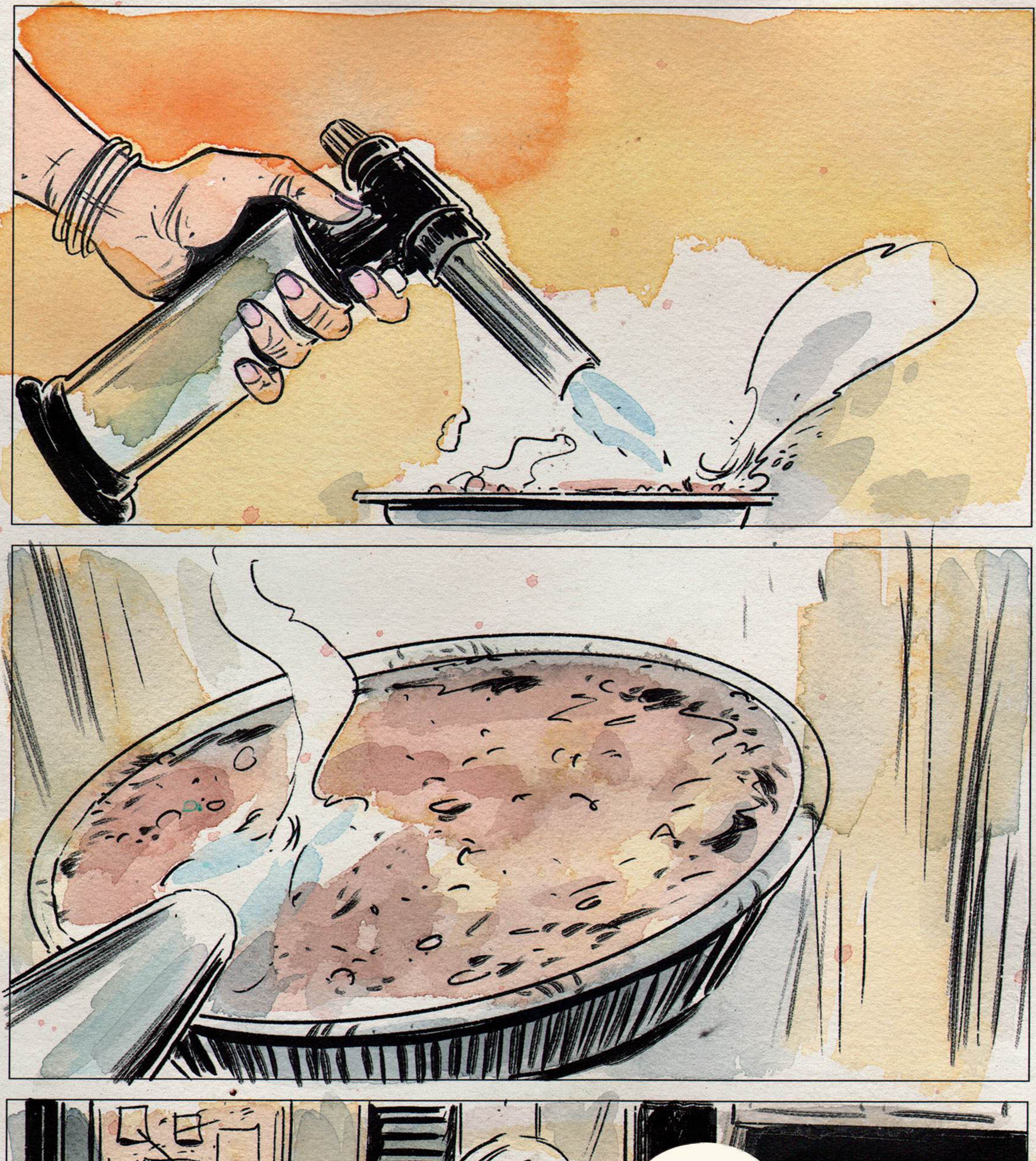

We solve one case, Aunt Merry, and it's a fluke. Solve two, we're on a roll. Solve three and all of a sudden we're a couple of geniuses, real wizards with a running streak of successes. What is this, our fifth...sixth?
It might be six if we count the unfortunate affair with the Cobalt Honeycombs, dear nephew. But tell me, when are we no longer amateurs but honest-to-goodness professionals?
Pros get paid.
Crime doesn't pay.
Solving a crime is its own reward.
But doesn't solving crimes pay?
KLINK!

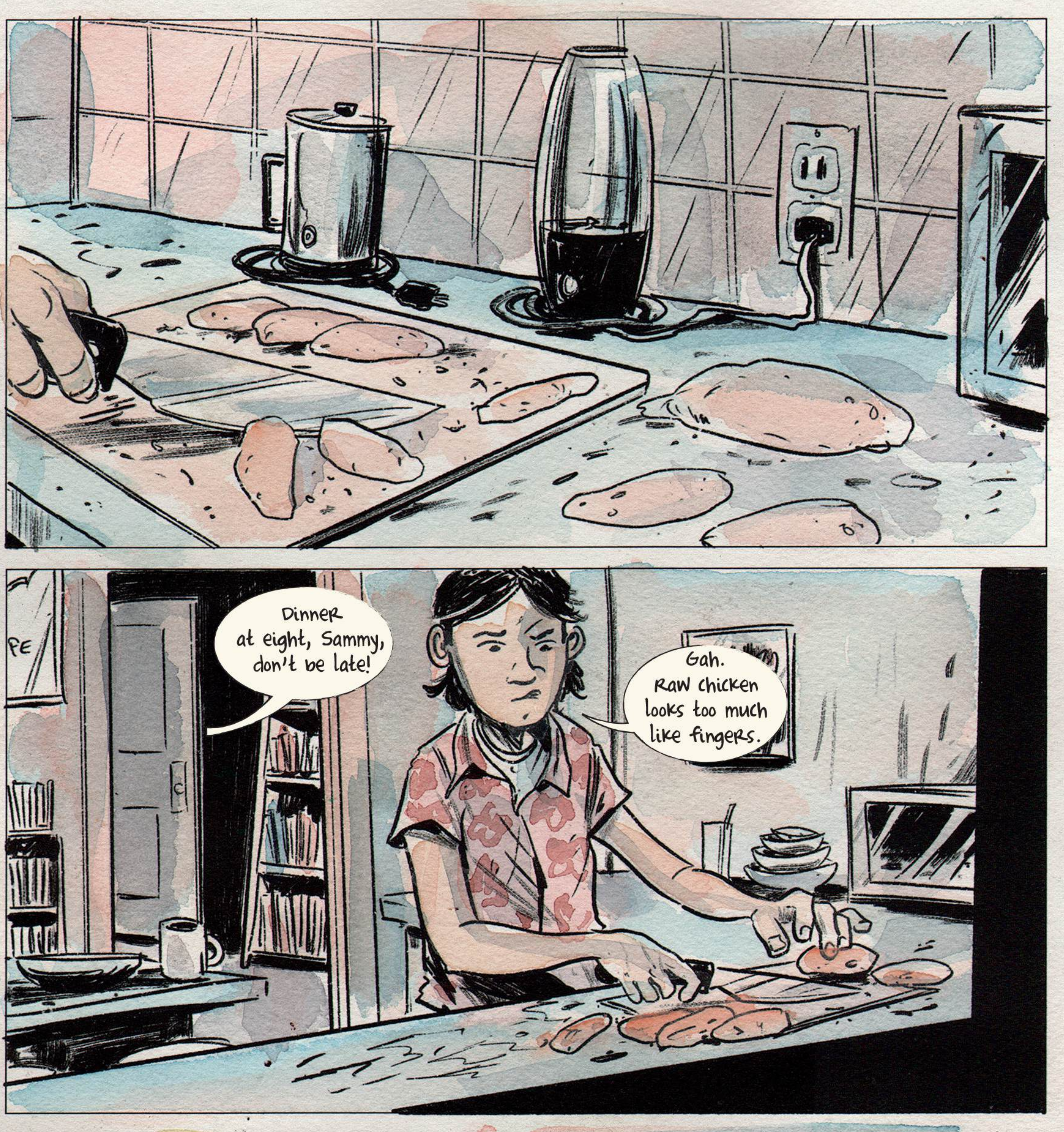


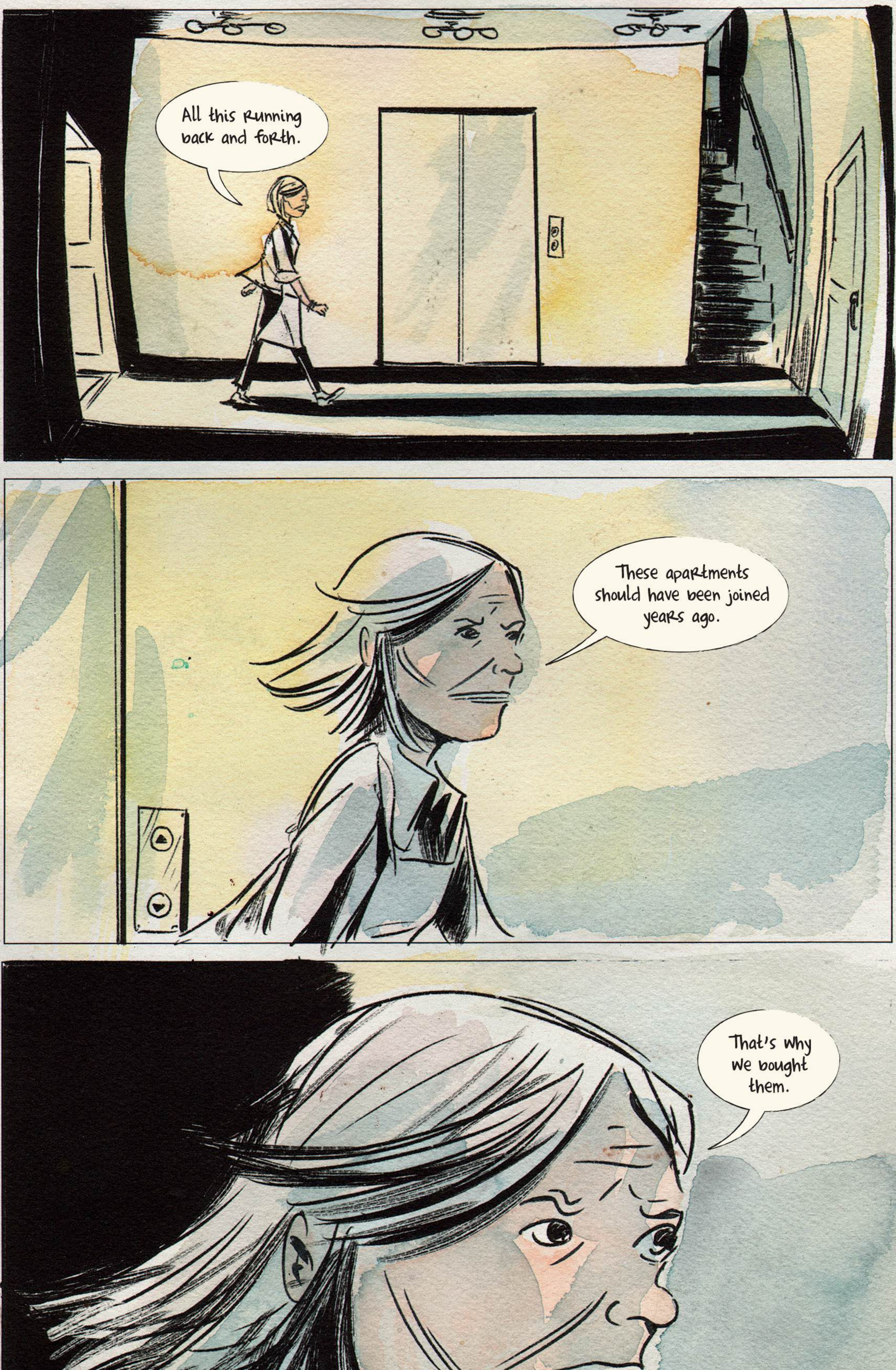
ST. LOUIS... ONE WEEK EARLIER.


FSHHHHH
FSHHH
SSHHHHH
SHH
HHHHHHHSS
GAHHH!

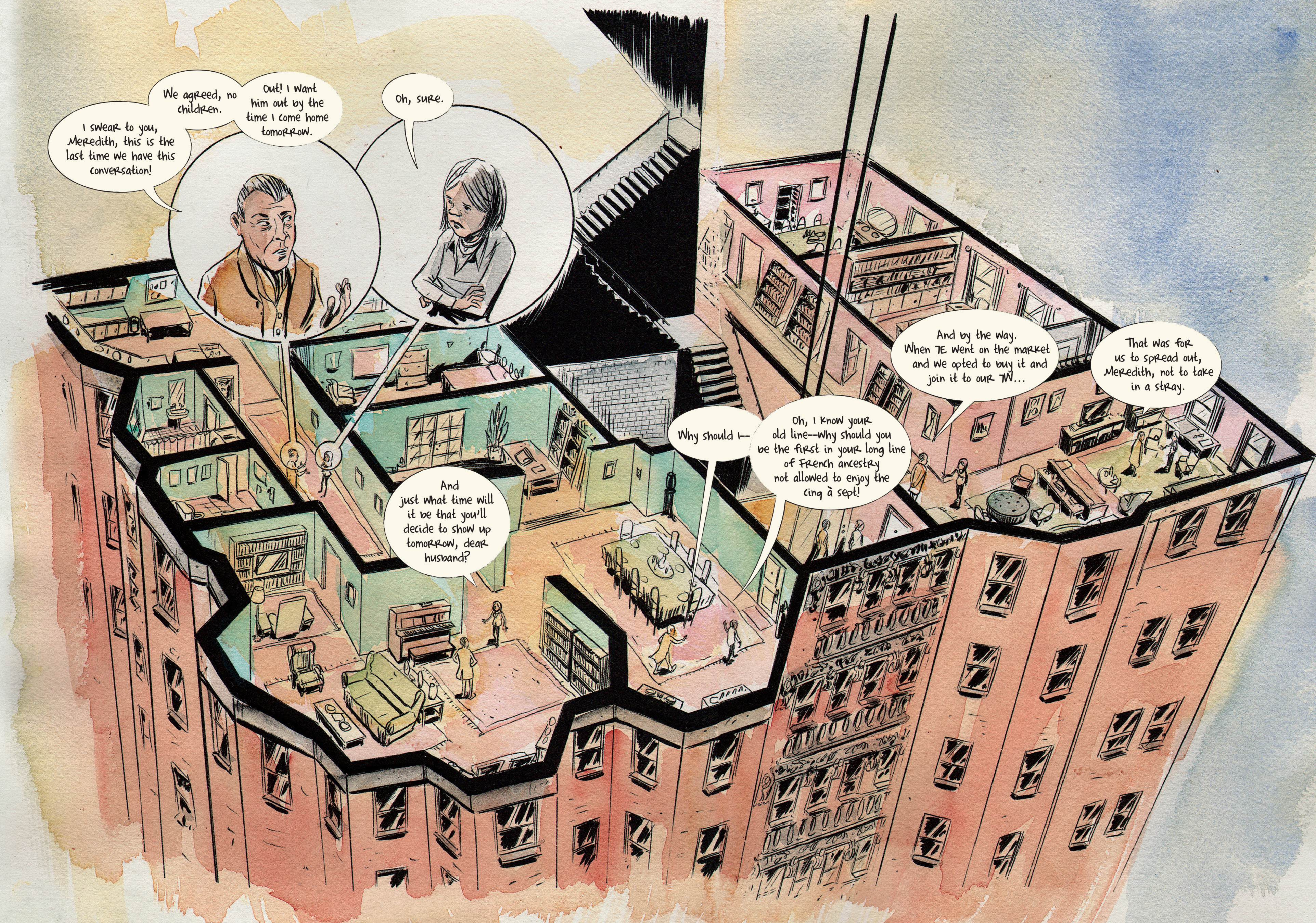

CHOP CHK
CHK
UGH!
CHK


That should do it.


Dinner at eight, Sammy, don't be late!
Gah. Raw chicken looks too much like fingers.
"Dinner at eight, Sammy, don't be late." It's Sam.
Sammy was the name of your dog!
Aloha shirts not allowed at the table!


All this running back and forth.
These apartments should have been joined years ago.
That's why we bought them.

YEARS AGO...


I swear to you, Meredith, this is the last time we have this conversation!
We agreed, no children.
Out! I want him out by the time I come home tomorrow.
Oh, sure.
And just what time will it be that you'll decide to show up tomorrow, dear husband?
Why should I—
Oh, I know your old line--why should you be the first in your long line of French ancestry not allowed to enjoy the cinq à sept!
And by the way. When 7E went on the market and we opted to buy it and join it to our 7W...
That was for us to spread out, Meredith, not to take in a stray.

Pick, Meredith. Him or me. Or maybe you should both be out by tomorrow.
You're an NPD, Arthur. Finally, after all these years, I have you pegged, NPD.
What the hell is an NPD?
Narcissistic personality disorder. You to a tee. You desperately wanted me but never loved me and now you are jealous...
Jealous of an abandoned child who keeps me company and who is no bother to you because he learned how to stay out of your way.
Maybe it is time you saw the last of us both.

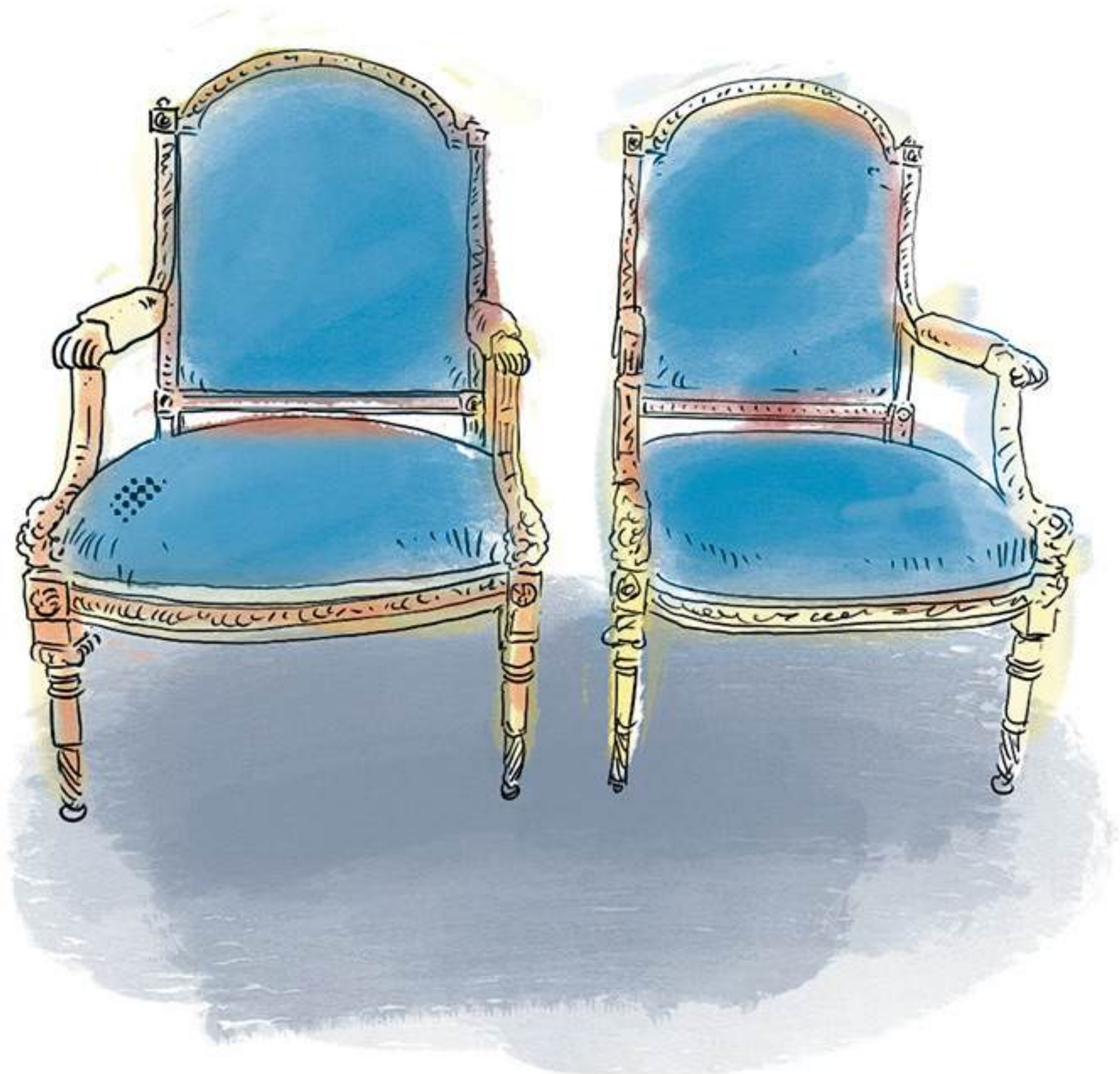
Present day.
BLING

Let me help. Give me that cane.
Don't touch it. I've got it.
Walking stick. It's a walking stick. If YOU were carrying it, then it would be a cane.
You always give me a chuckle, dear boy. Some day it will be a cane for you, too.
What's all this?
HAPPY BIRTHDA
Surprise!
Uh, this is definitely a surprise.
Auntie. It's...uh...NOT my birthday.
Sammy, dear, it's the day you were born to me.
The anniversary of the first time your parents left you in my care.
Yeah...
Mom and Dad...

14 YEARS AGO
—don't use money here. Money is just an idea, man.
Designed to keep the Rats Racing. Biting at each other. Here...?
Love is our sustenance. It will dissolve all the corrupt social constructs. There is no "family." There is no "mother." There is no...
Please... call me Roger.
There is only universal love for all...
I love it, Dad!
Wow! A secret compartment!
--heading to Guyana. We're building a temple.
Didn't a cult already try that?
It's not a cult, Merry. It's a thought construct made real.
...a thought construct...
The hierarchy is demolished. Structure is obstacle...
CULT MISSING
--a puzzle. Can you figure it out?
Let's call it a nuzzle. Because it's a nuzzle puzzle.
7D in a W
24H in a D
Seven days in a week. Twenty-four hours in a day!
Very good!

Present day.
Hm.
Can you figure it out?
88 K
ON A
P
Eighty-eight piano keys!
What is all this? I have a suspicious feeling I'm packing my bags for somewhere.
Aloha
It's your welcome-back-from-Hawaii-start-packing dinner.
Remember how we laughed at Animal Crackers, Sammy, when Groucho sang, "Hello, I must be going"?
Heh-heh. I have a nice little surprise for us.
SEATS
A1
A2
April? Sounds rainy.
What's this really about? Or should I say "por qué"?
Aloh
Parkay? Margarine has nothing to do with this. You must mean "pourquoi."
It's about the fauteuils, Sammy. The fauteuils.
Oh. The chairs?
Aloh
Don't tell me that you have already forgotten…

The Story of the Chairs



Lot 294 Estimate: $700 - $900

Starting Bid: $350

FRENCH FAUTEUILS

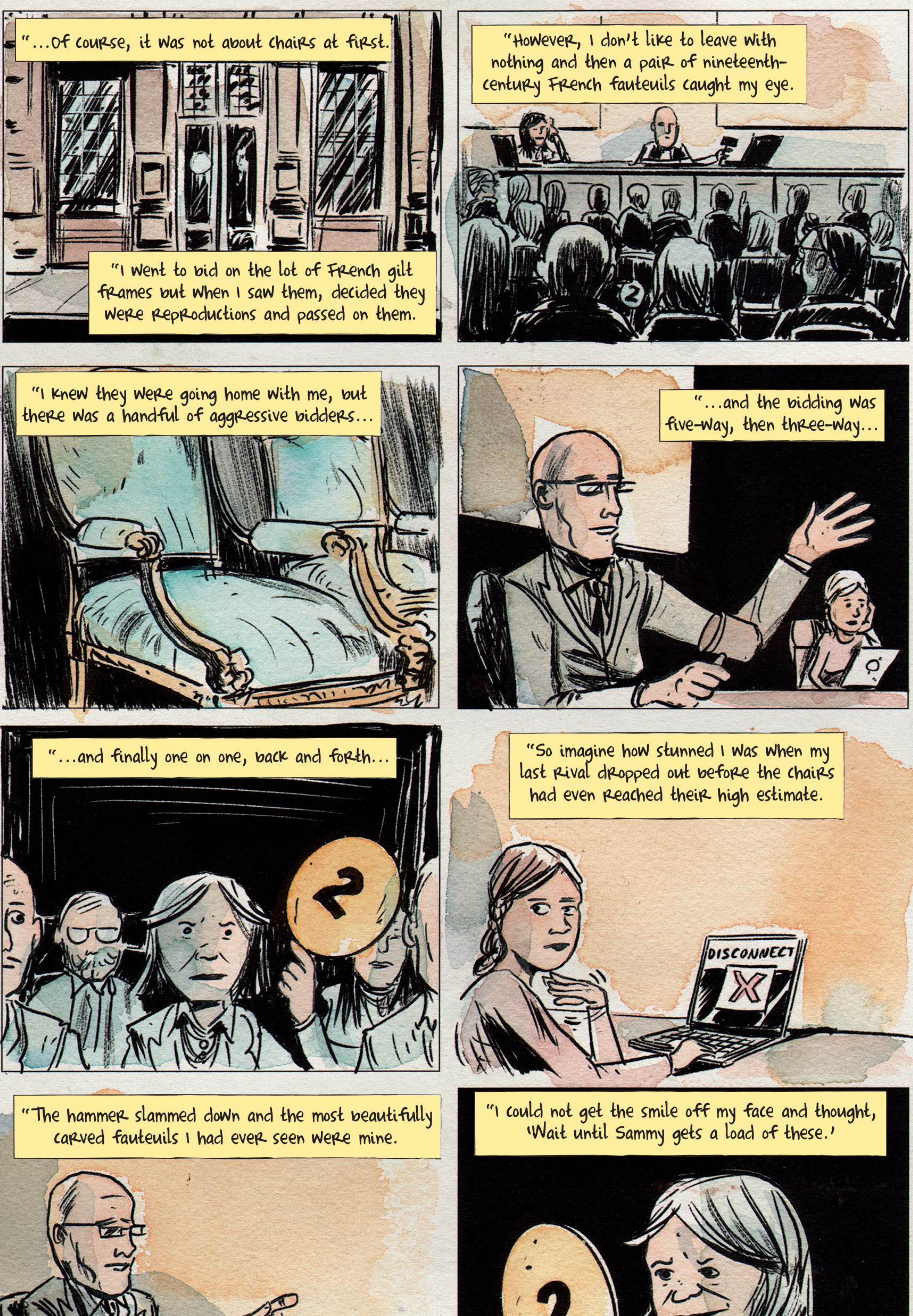
Louis XVI era, late 18th or early 19th century. Marie Antoinette-style armchairs with cornucopia arms, wheat-ear and lily-of-the-valley carved pattern.

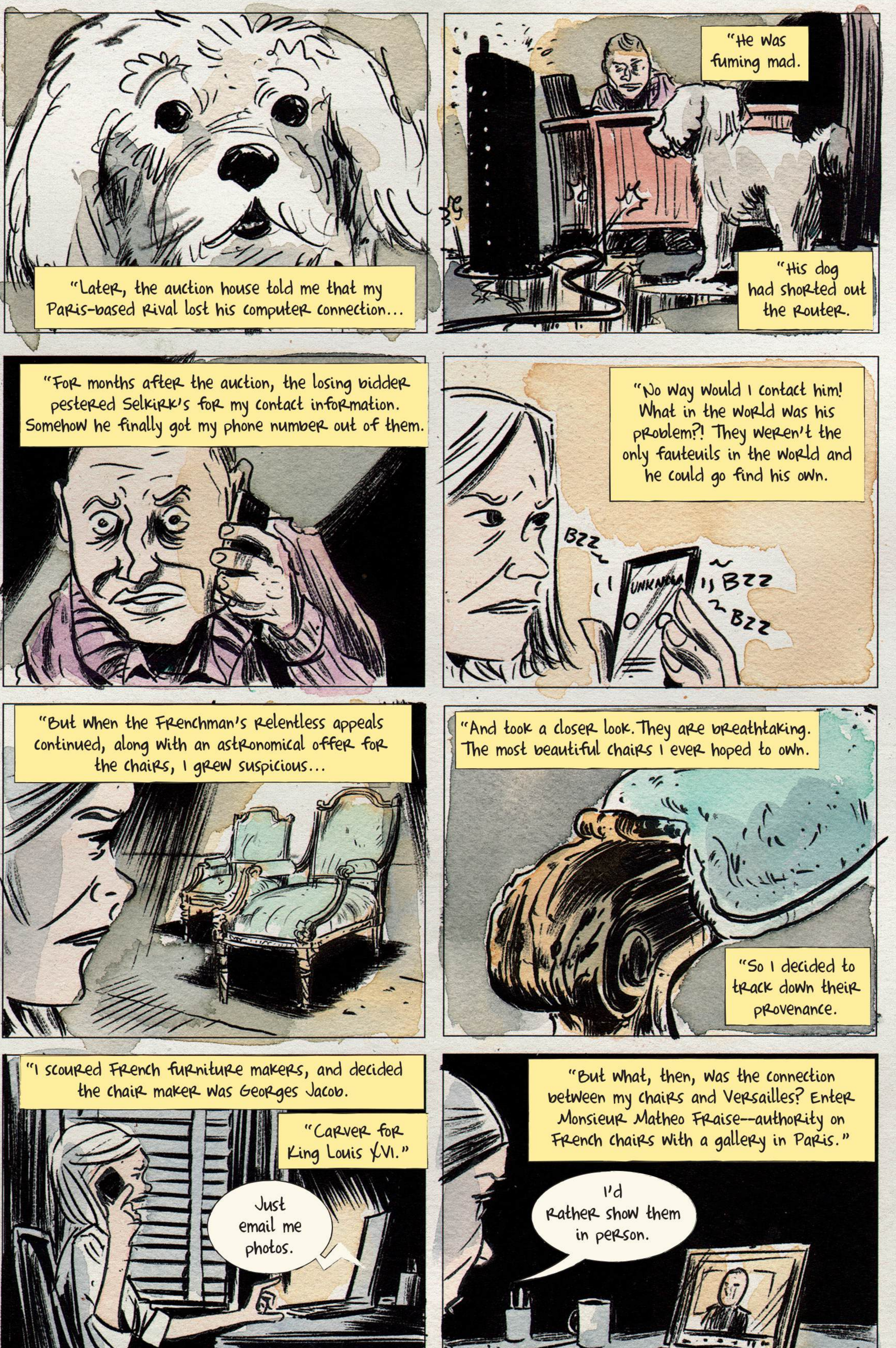
Condition:

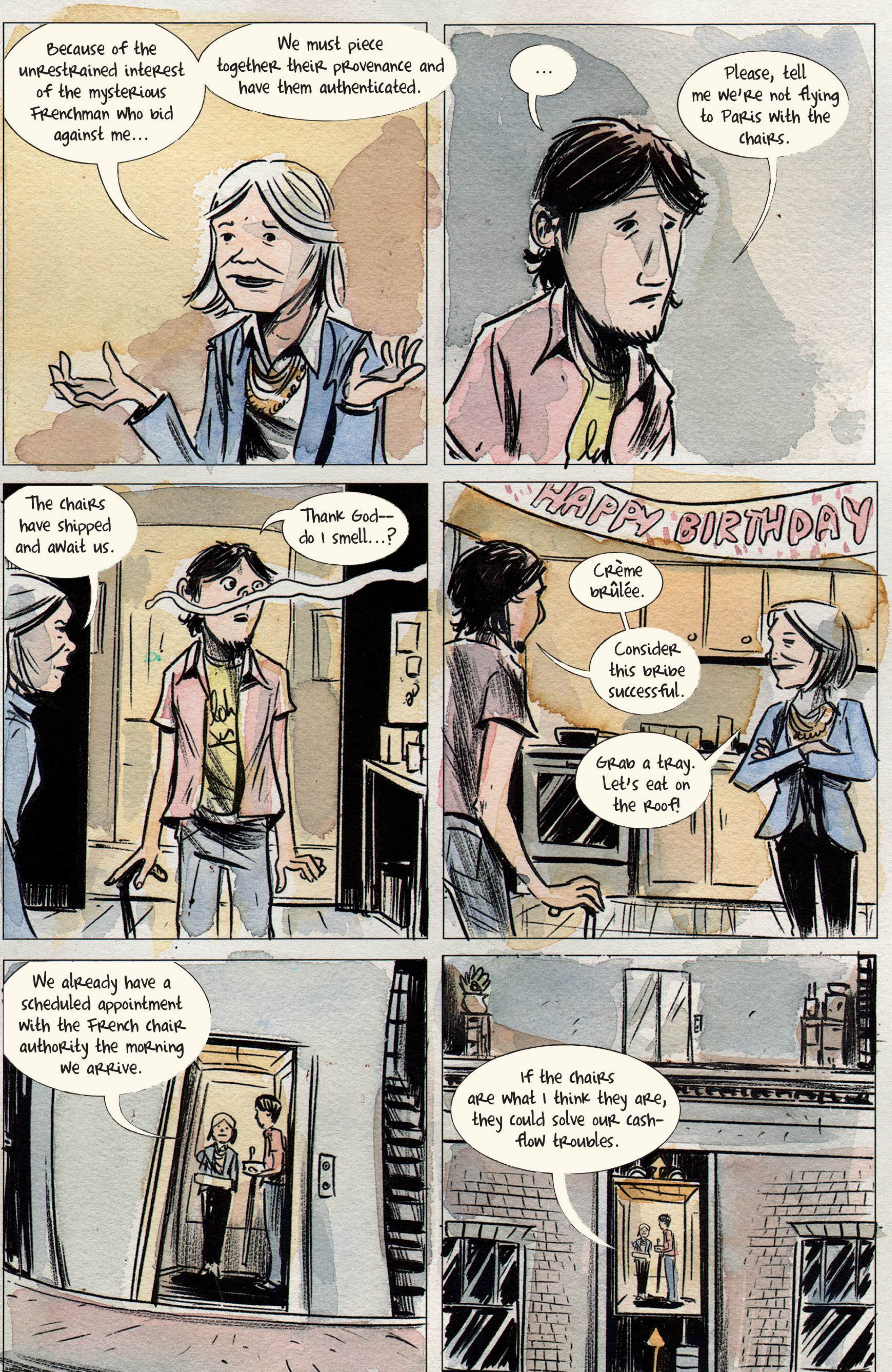
Top crown frame fracture adjacent to a prior repair

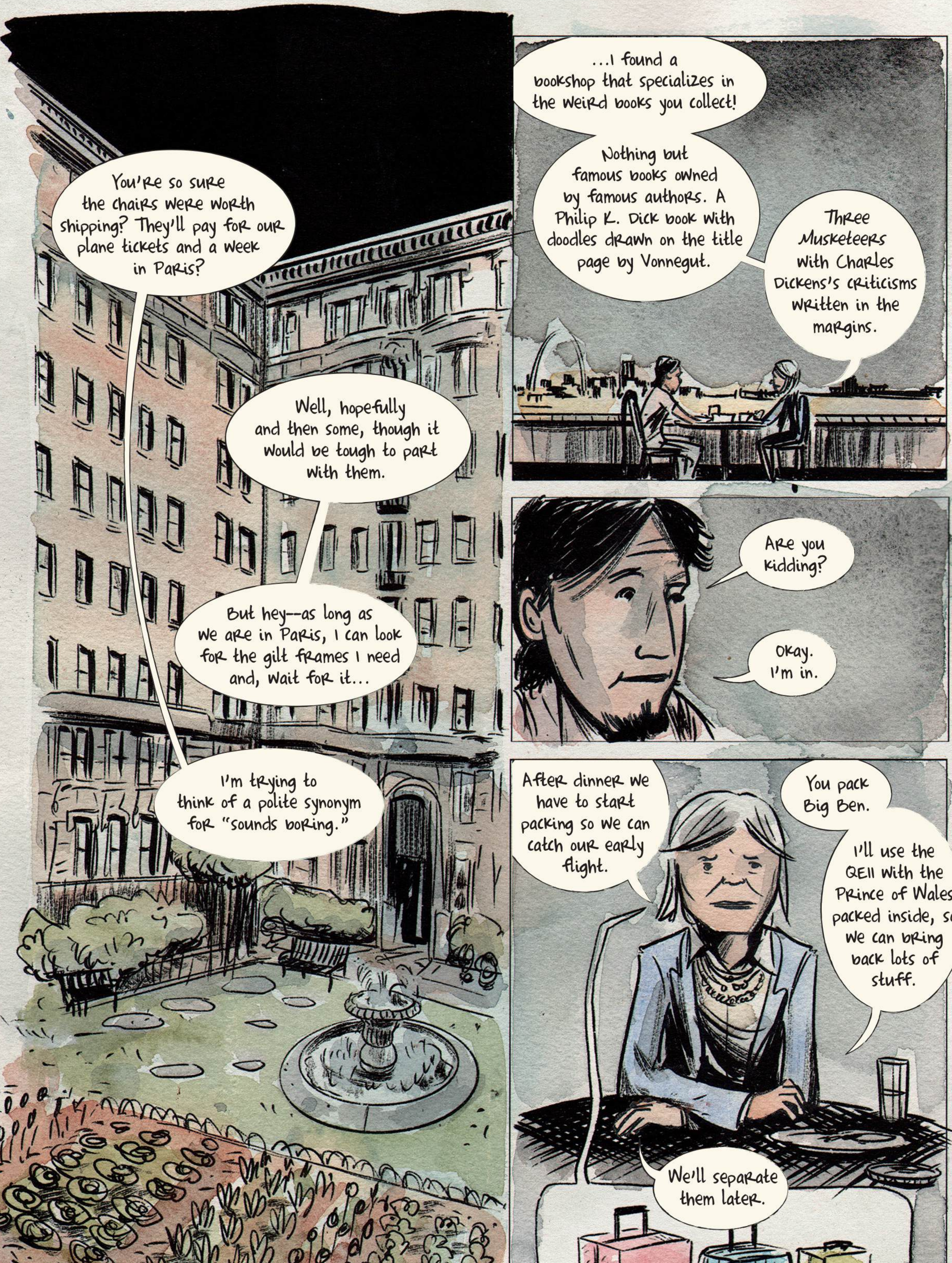
Loose left arm joint at back upright

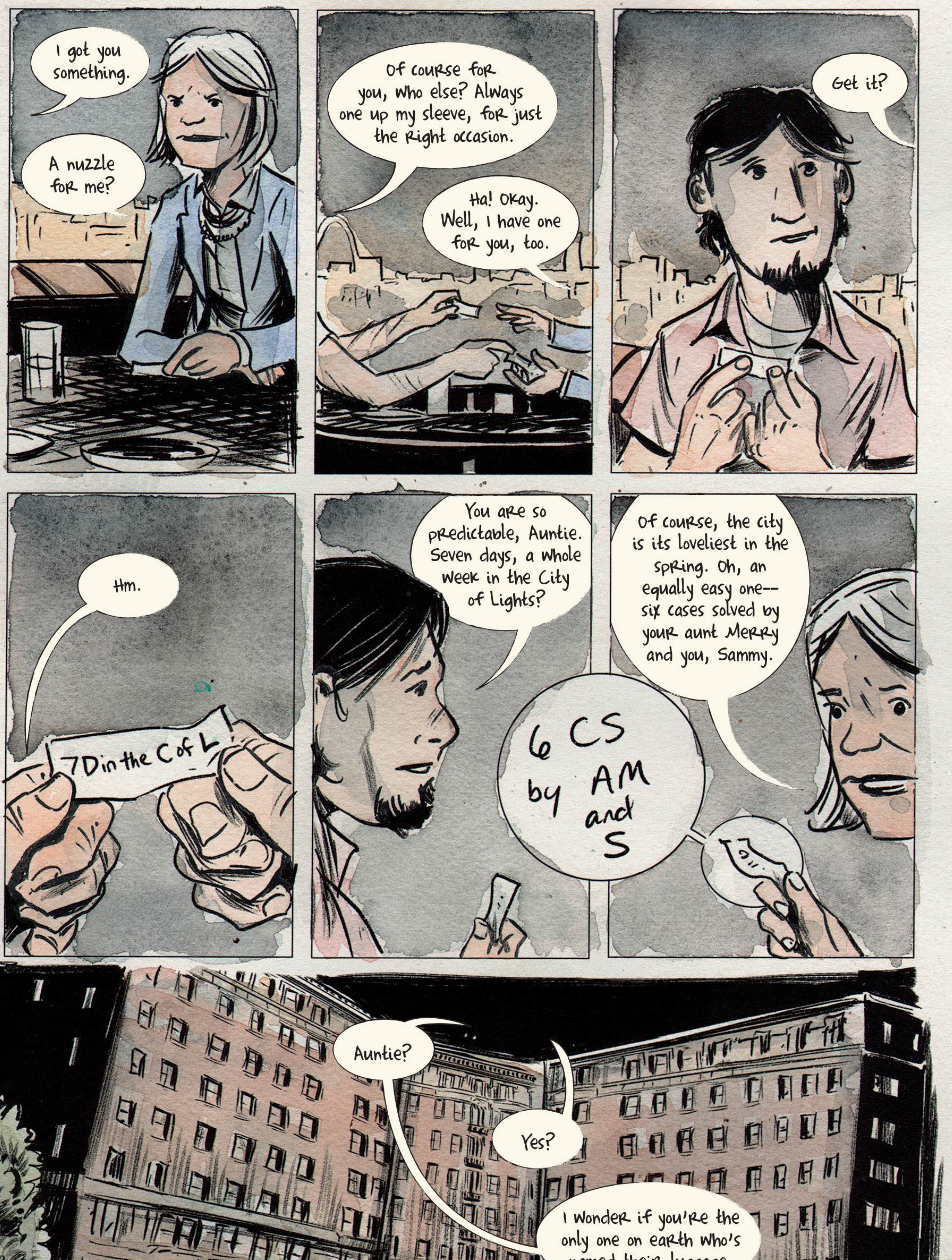
Some splitting of the upholstery

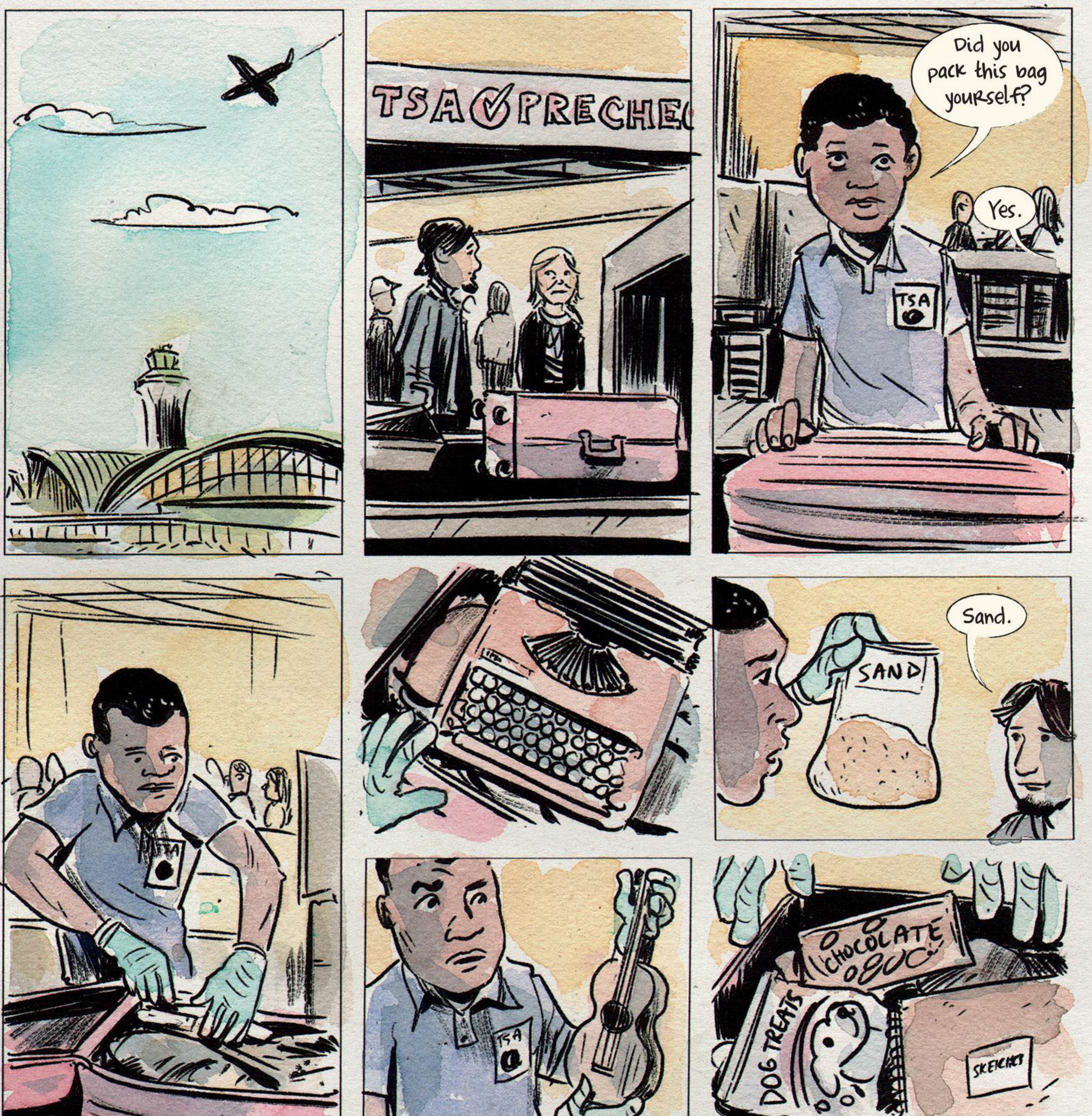

"...Of course, it was not about chairs at first.
"I went to bid on the lot of French gilt frames but when I saw them, decided they were reproductions and passed on them.
"However, I don't like to leave with nothing and then a pair of nineteenth-century French fauteuils caught my eye.
2
"I knew they were going home with me, but there was a handful of aggressive bidders...
"...and the bidding was five-way, then three-way...
"...and finally one on one, back and forth...
2
"So imagine how stunned I was when my last rival dropped out before the chairs had even reached their high estimate.
DISCONNECT
X
"The hammer slammed down and the most beautifully carved fauteuils I had ever seen were mine.
BANG
"I could not get the smile off my face and thought, 'Wait until Sammy gets a load of these.'
2

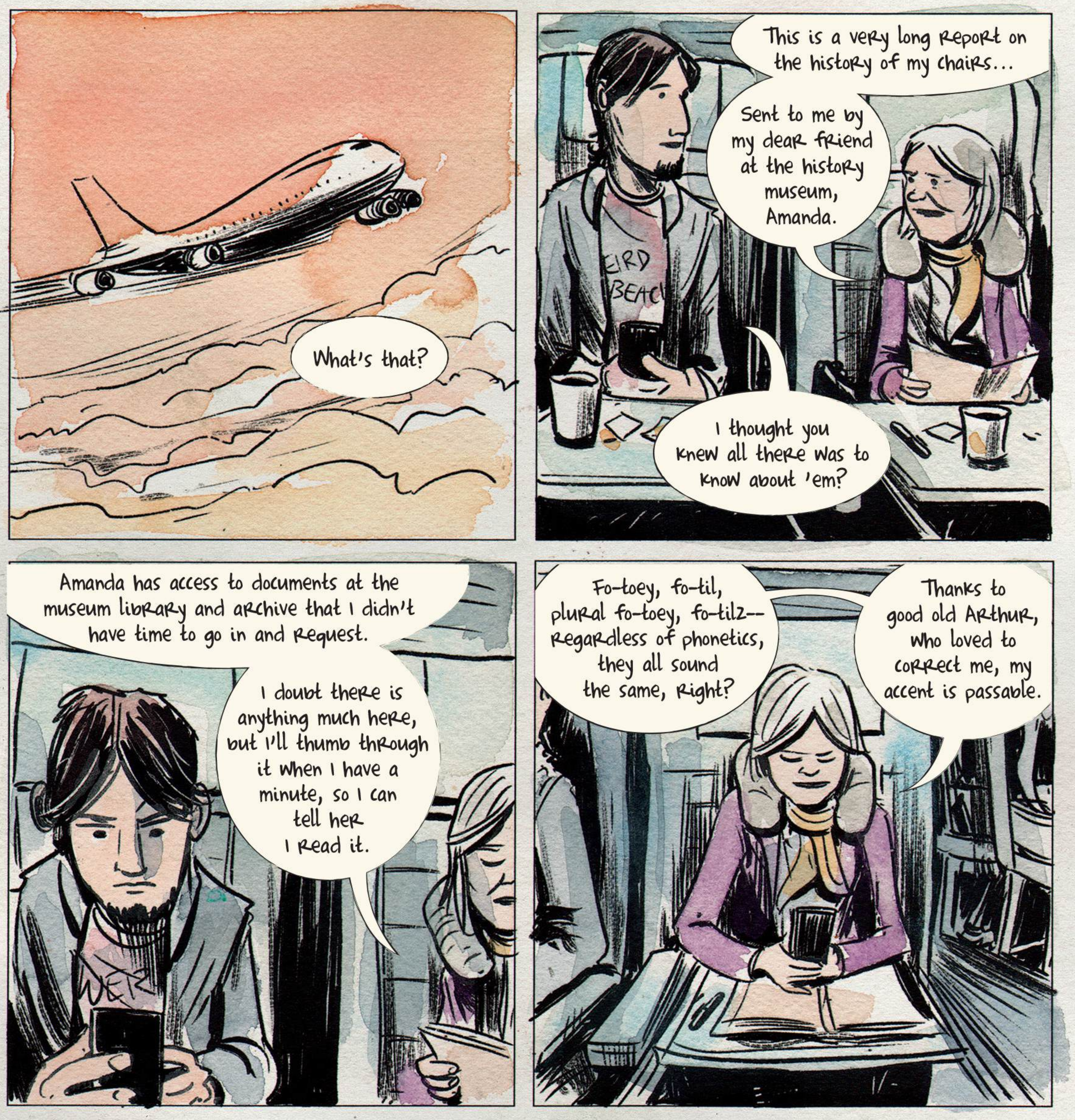

"Later, the auction house told me that my Paris-based rival lost his computer connection...
"He was fuming mad.
"His dog had shorted out the router.
"For months after the auction, the losing bidder pestered Selkirk's for my contact information. Somehow he finally got my phone number out of them.
"No way would I contact him! What in the world was his problem?! They weren't the only fauteuils in the world and he could go find his own.
BZZ
UNKNOW
BZZ
BZZ
"But when the Frenchman's relentless appeals continued, along with an astronomical offer for the chairs, I grew suspicious...
"And took a closer look. They are breathtaking. The most beautiful chairs I ever hoped to own.
"So I decided to track down their provenance.
"I scoured French furniture makers, and decided the chair maker was Georges Jacob.
"Carver for King Louis XVI."
Just email me photos.
"But what, then, was the connection between my chairs and Versailles? Enter Monsieur Matheo Fraise--authority on French chairs with a gallery in Paris."
I'd rather show them in person.


Because of the unrestrained interest of the mysterious Frenchman who bid against me...
We must piece together their provenance and have them authenticated.
...
Please, tell me we're not flying to Paris with the chairs.
The chairs have shipped and await us.
Thank God-- do I smell...?
HAPPY BIRTHDAY
Crème brûlée.
Consider this bribe successful.
Grab a tray. Let's eat on the roof!
We already have a scheduled appointment with the French chair authority the morning we arrive.
If the chairs are what I think they are, they could solve our cash-flow troubles.

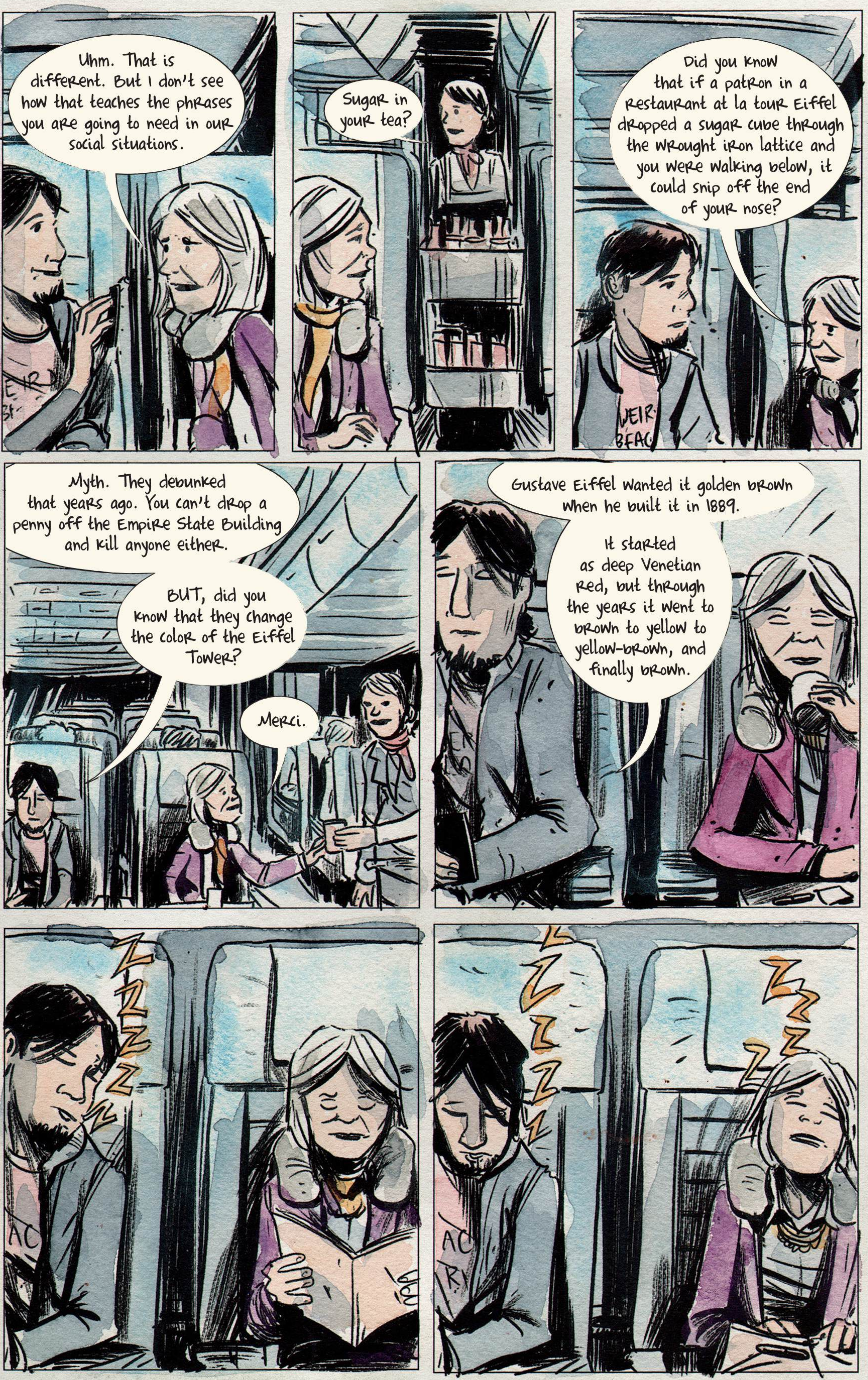

You're so sure the chairs were worth shipping? They'll pay for our plane tickets and a week in Paris?
Well, hopefully and then some, though it would be tough to part with them.
But hey--as long as we are in Paris, I can look for the gilt frames I need and, wait for it...
I'm trying to think of a polite synonym for "sounds boring."
...I found a bookshop that specializes in the weird books you collect!
Nothing but famous books owned by famous authors. A Philip K. Dick book with doodles drawn on the title page by Vonnegut.
Three Musketeers with Charles Dickens's criticisms written in the margins.
Are you kidding?
Okay. I'm in.
After dinner we have to start packing so we can catch our early flight.
You pack Big Ben.
I'll use the QEII with the Prince of Wales packed inside, so we can bring back lots of stuff.
We'll separate them later.
Big Ben
QEII
Prince of Wales

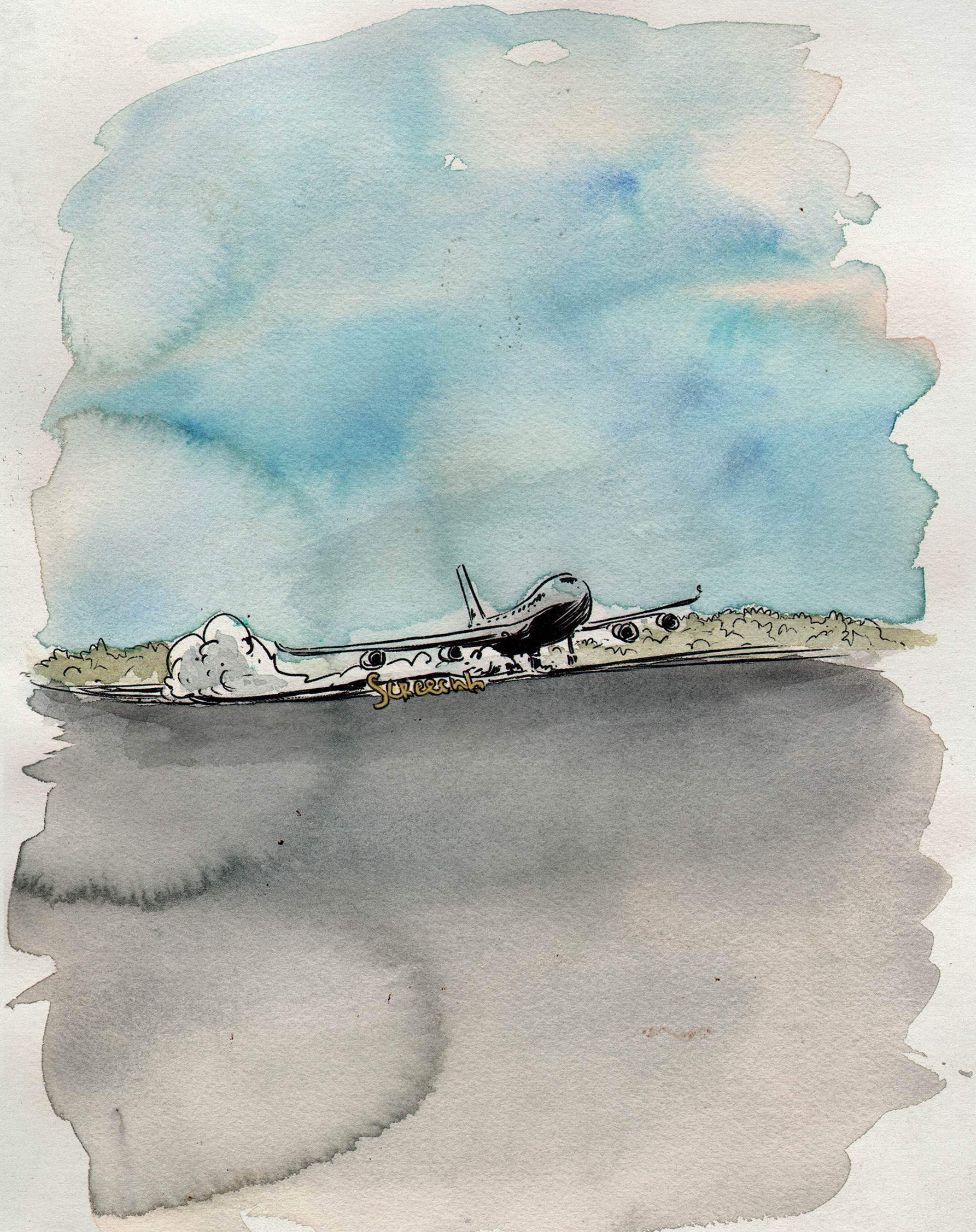

I got you something.
A nuzzle for me?
Of course for you, who else? Always one up my sleeve, for just the right occasion.
Ha! Okay. Well, I have one for you, too.
Get it?
Hm.
7D in the C of L
You are so predictable, Auntie. Seven days, a whole week in the City of Lights?
Of course, the city is its loveliest in the spring. Oh, an equally easy one-- six cases solved by your aunt Merry and you, Sammy.
6 CS by AM and S
Auntie?
Yes?
I wonder if you're the only one on earth who's named their luggage.

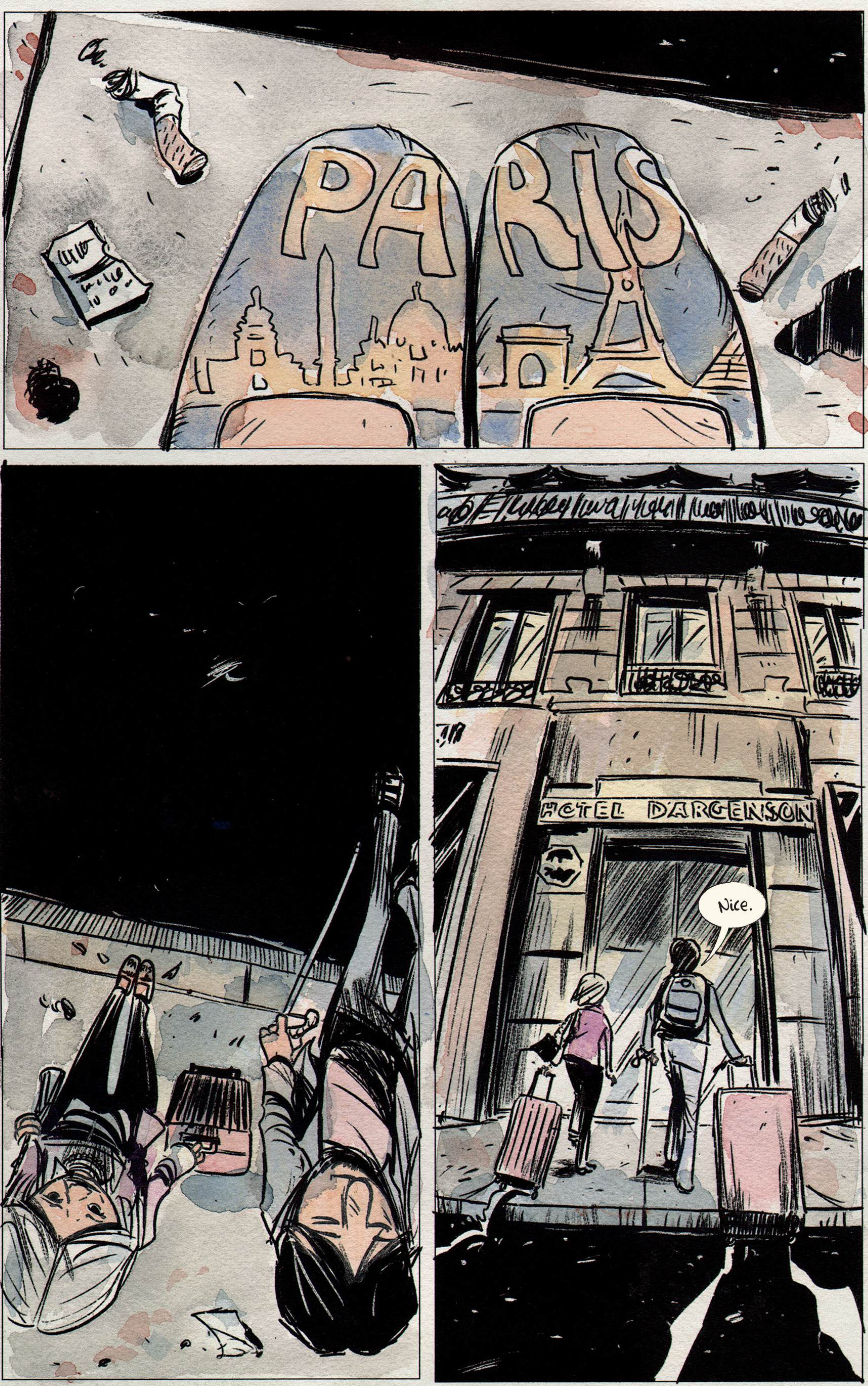

TSA PRECHEC
Did you pack this bag yourself?
Yes.
TSA
TSA
SAND
Sand.
TSA
CHOCOLATE
DOG TREATS
SKETCHES
LOCK PICK SET
We're world-famous detectives.
We need this stuff.

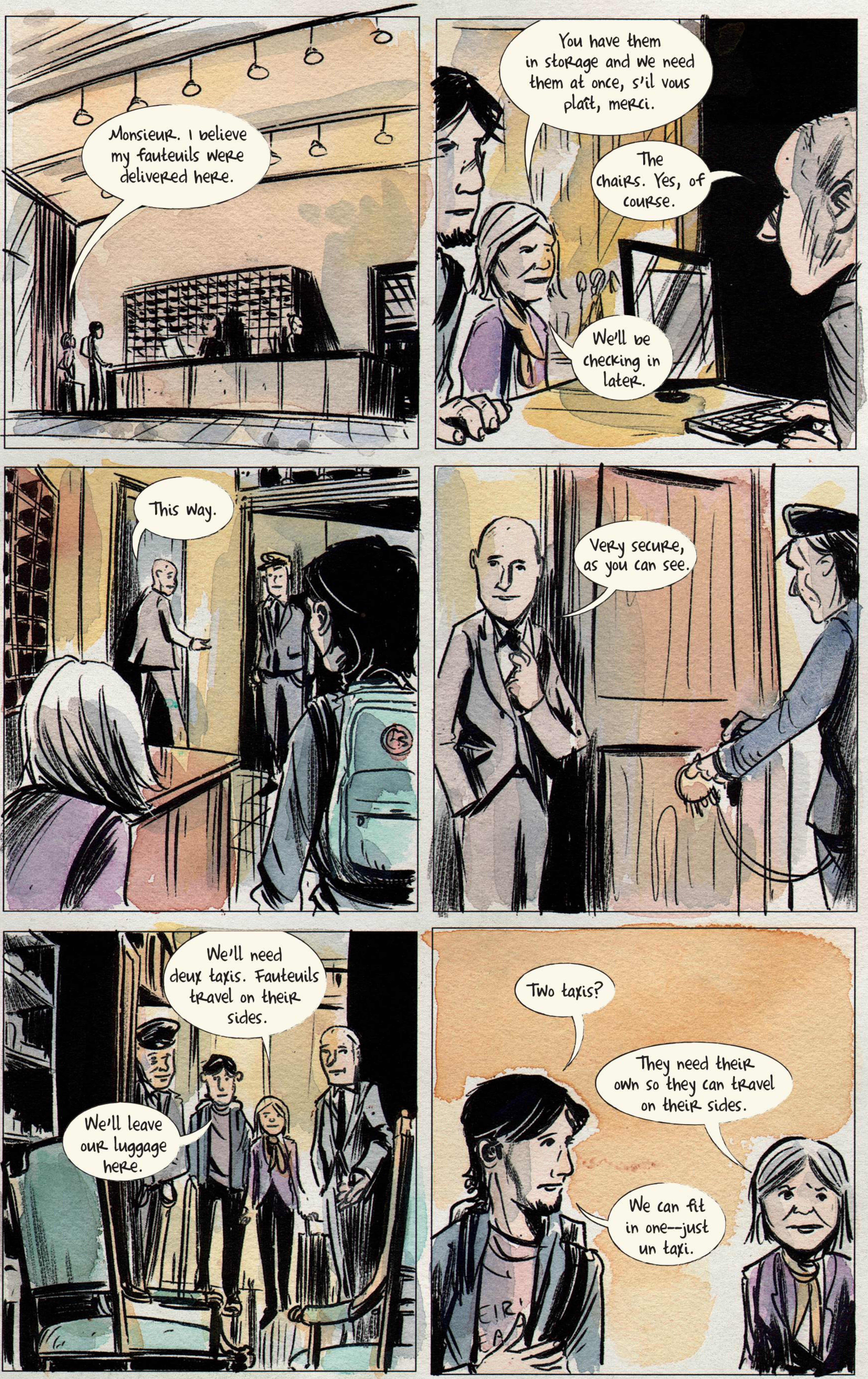

What's that?
This is a very long report on the history of my chairs...
Sent to me by my dear friend at the history museum, Amanda.
I thought you knew all there was to know about 'em?
Amanda has access to documents at the museum library and archive that I didn't have time to go in and request.
I doubt there is anything much here, but I'll thumb through it when I have a minute, so I can tell her I read it.
Fo-toey, fo-til, plural fo-toey, fo-tilz-- regardless of phonetics, they all sound the same, right?
Thanks to good old Arthur, who loved to correct me, my accent is passable.
Oh, you're doing Duolingo, good choice. Wait...that's not an owl--what on earth are you doing, Sammy?
Brushing up on my en française with this language-learning app.
dogindo
That is NOT Duolingo.

Nope. Found a free app. I'm hooked on translating this story.
It's a good one. Look at it...
I'm so sick of my job. But this isn't my job.
My job is killing...
...then running away.
Ironically. My job is killing me. Slowly. Over time.
The same thing over and over again...
...déjà vu.
Stuck in a cycle of death ...but not this time...
I promise myself. This time will be different.
You have ketchup on your shirt.
If I can just save this one life...
Oh.


Uhm. That is different. But I don't see how that teaches the phrases you are going to need in our social situations.
Sugar in your tea?
Did you know that if a patron in a restaurant at la tour Eiffel dropped a sugar cube through the wrought iron lattice and you were walking below, it could snip off the end of your nose?
Myth. They debunked that years ago. You can't drop a penny off the Empire State Building and kill anyone either.
BUT, did you know that they change the color of the Eiffel Tower?
Merci.
Gustave Eiffel wanted it golden brown when he built it in 1889.
It started as deep Venetian red, but through the years it went to brown to yellow to yellow-brown, and finally brown.

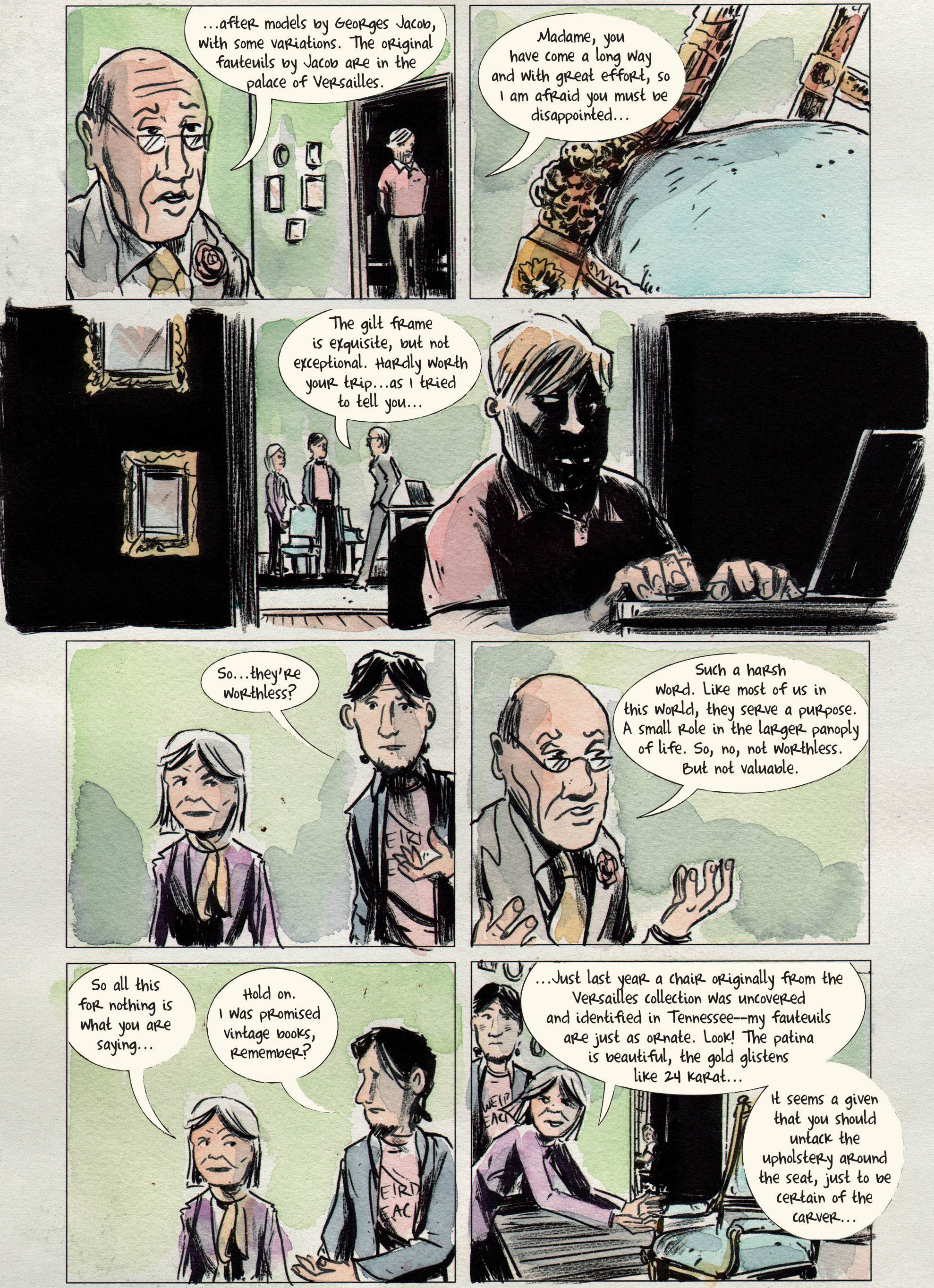

Screeech

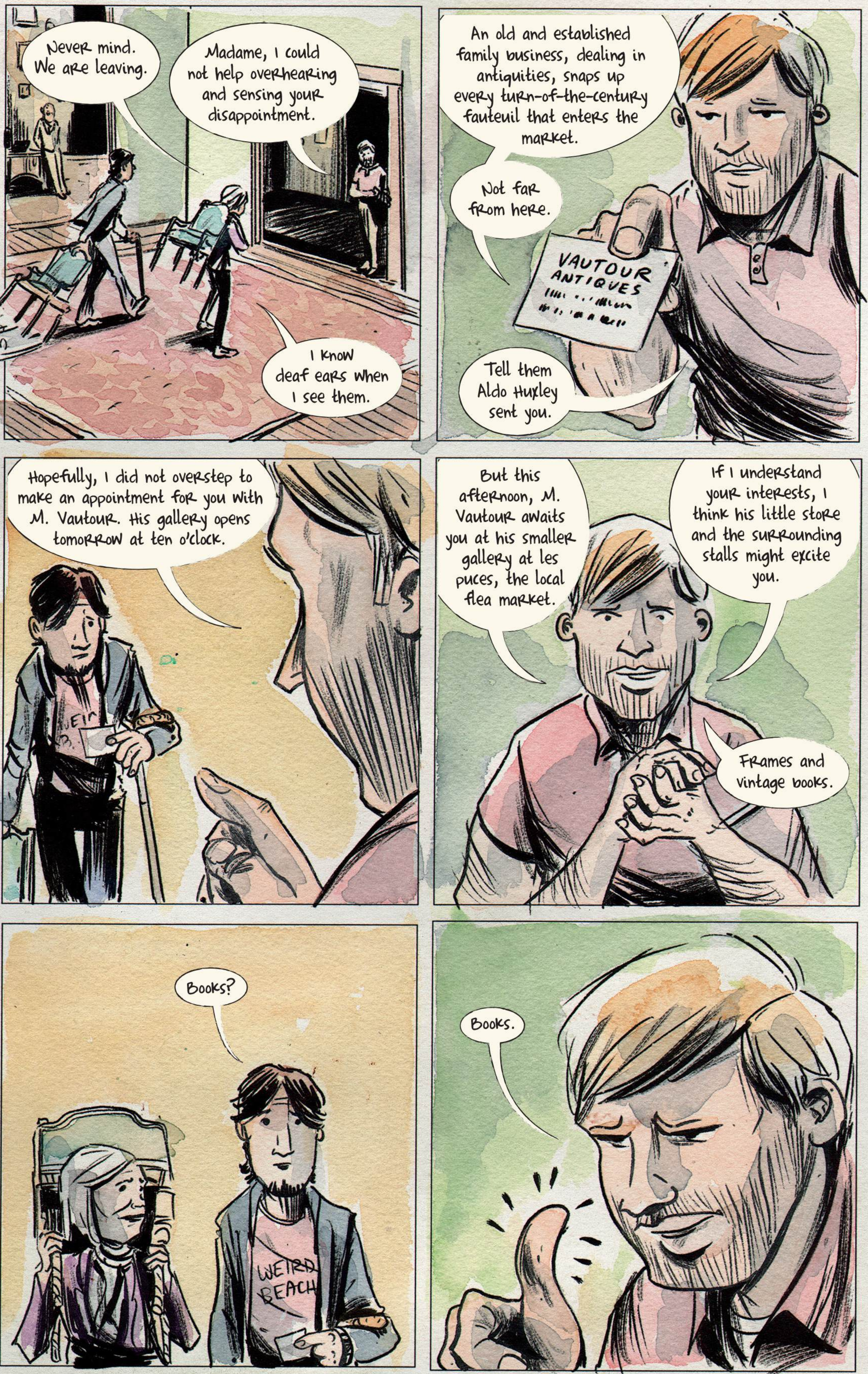

PARIS
HOTEL DARGENSON
Nice.


Monsieur. I believe my fauteuils were delivered here.
You have them in storage and we need them at once, s'il vous plaît, merci.
The chairs. Yes, of course.
We'll be checking in later.
This way.
Very secure, as you can see.
We'll need deux taxis. Fauteuils travel on their sides.
We'll leave our luggage here.
Two taxis?
They need their own so they can travel on their sides.
We can fit in one--just un taxi.

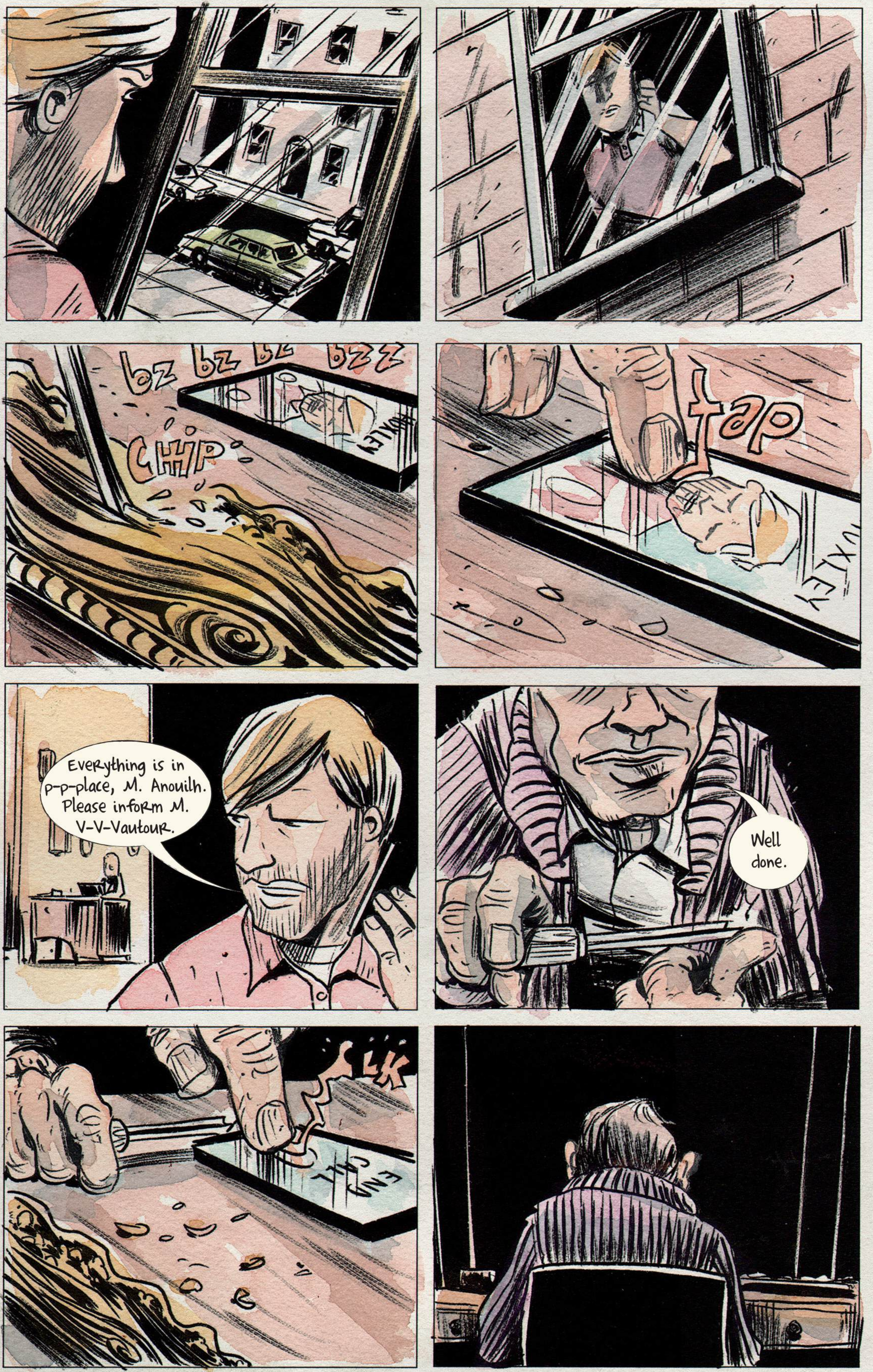
…
…
You couldn't have just sent photos?
What do you think?
Would I go through all this if it was unnecessary?
…

I have an appointment. Meredith Pearson.
This way.
Enchanté, madame and monsieur. Please, be seated, you must be exhausted from your journey.
So pleased to meet you, Monsieur Fraise. My card and one from the hotel, in case you need to reach us there...
Well...straight to business. I see you have the fauteuils. They were carved at the turn of the twentieth century...

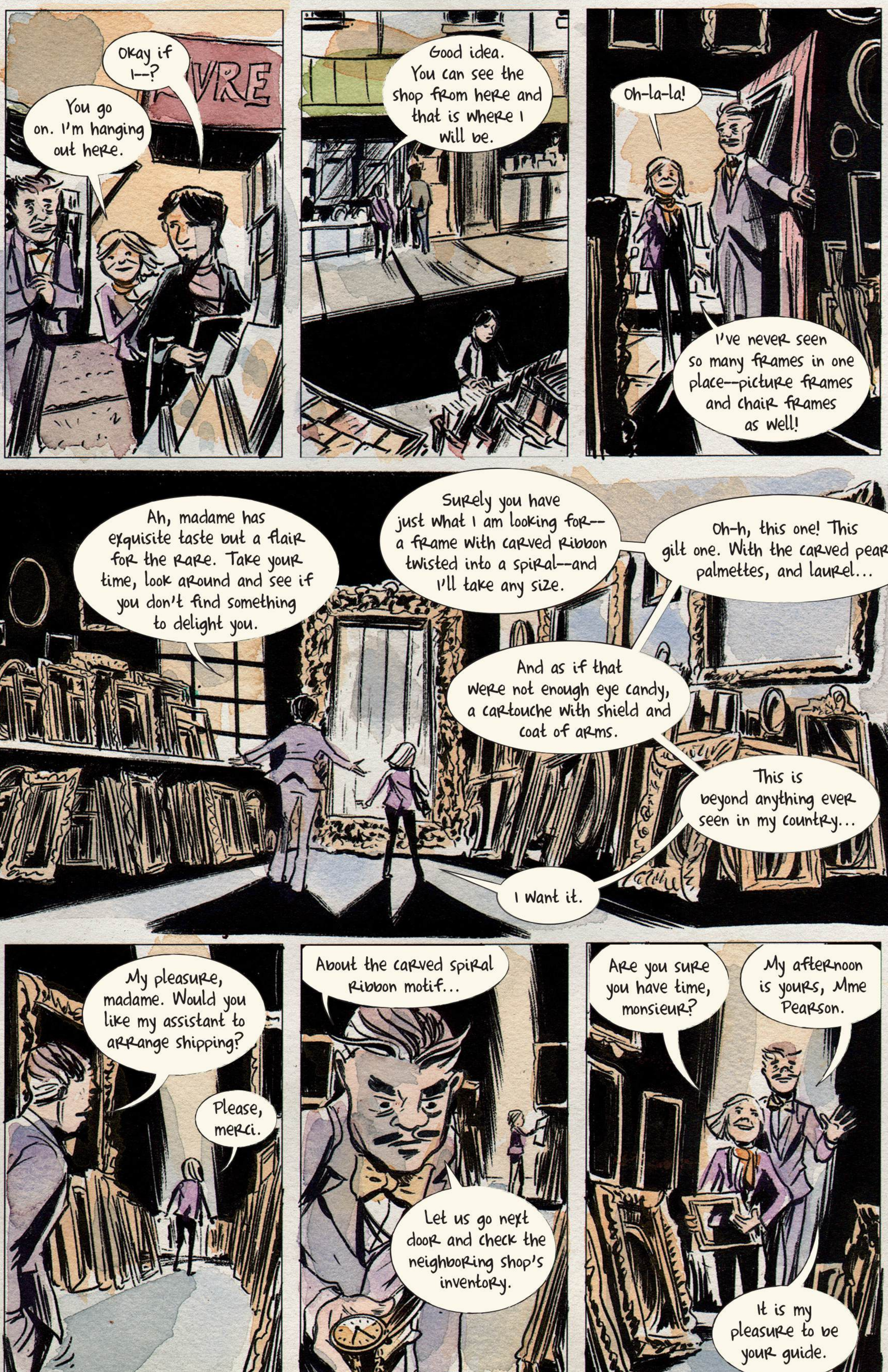

...after models by Georges Jacob, with some variations. The original fauteuils by Jacob are in the palace of Versailles.
Madame, you have come a long way and with great effort, so I am afraid you must be disappointed...
The gilt frame is exquisite, but not exceptional. Hardly worth your trip...as I tried to tell you...
So...they're worthless?
Such a harsh word. Like most of us in this world, they serve a purpose. A small role in the larger panoply of life. So, no, not worthless. But not valuable.
So all this for nothing is what you are saying...
Hold on. I was promised vintage books, remember?
...Just last year a chair originally from the Versailles collection was uncovered and identified in Tennessee--my fauteuils are just as ornate. Look! The patina is beautiful, the gold glistens like 24 karat...
It seems a given that you should untack the upholstery around the seat, just to be certain of the carver...

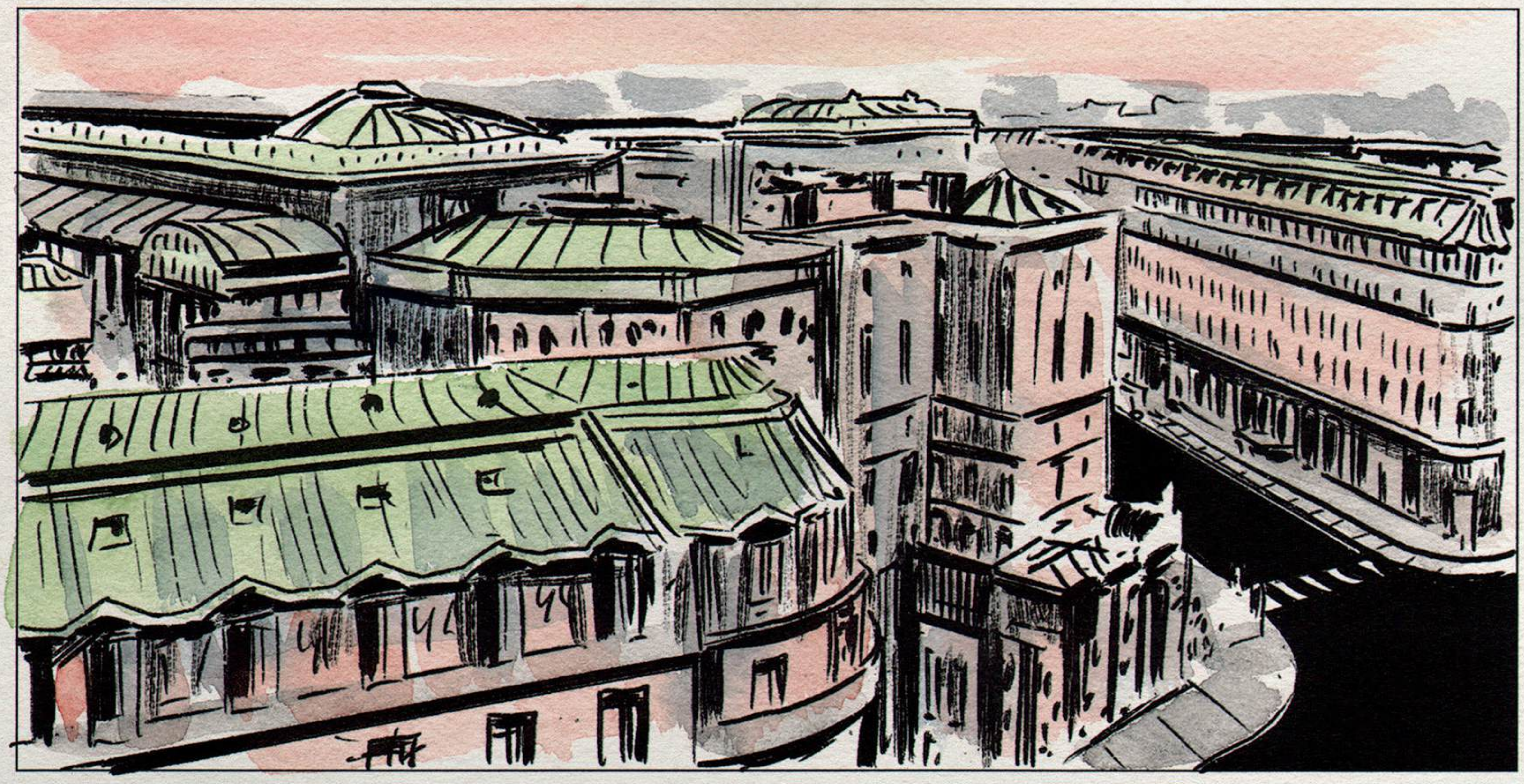

Never mind. We are leaving.
Madame, I could not help overhearing and sensing your disappointment.
I know deaf ears when I see them.
An old and established family business, dealing in antiquities, snaps up every turn-of-the-century fauteuil that enters the market.
Not far from here.
VAUTOUR ANTIQUES
Tell them Aldo Huxley sent you.
Hopefully, I did not overstep to make an appointment for you with M. Vautour. His gallery opens tomorrow at ten o'clock.
But this afternoon, M. Vautour awaits you at his smaller gallery at les puces, the local flea market.
If I understand your interests, I think his little store and the surrounding stalls might excite you.
Frames and vintage books.
Books?
WEIRD BEACH
Books.

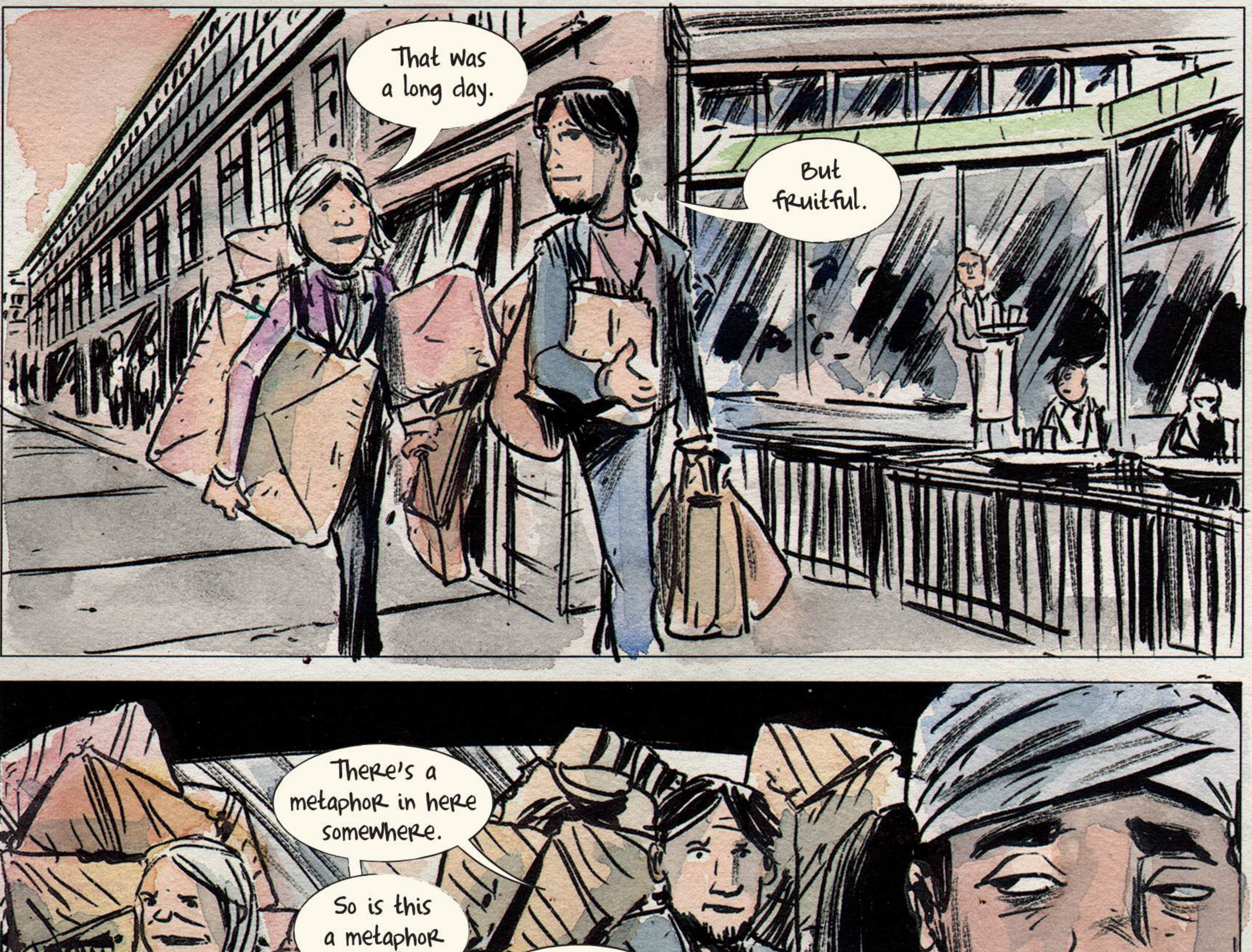
There's a metaphor in here somewhere.

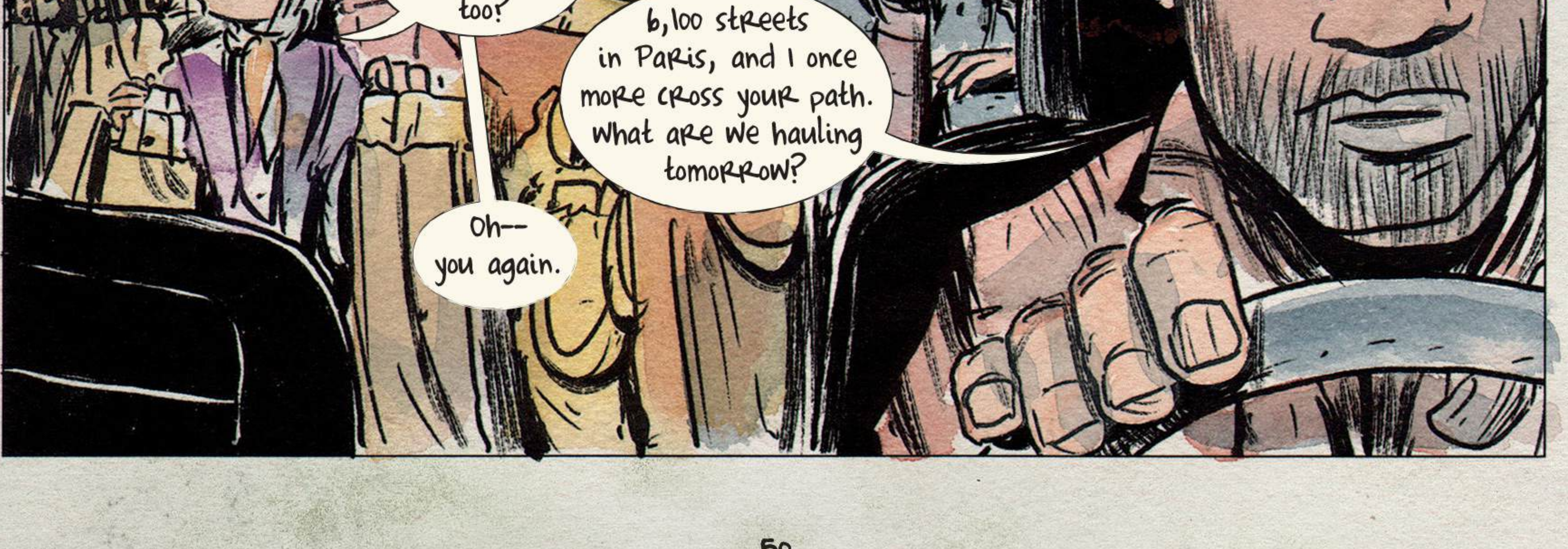

bz bz bz bzz
CHIP
tap
Everything is in p-p-place, M. Anouilh. Please inform M. V-V-Vautour.
Well done.
CLK

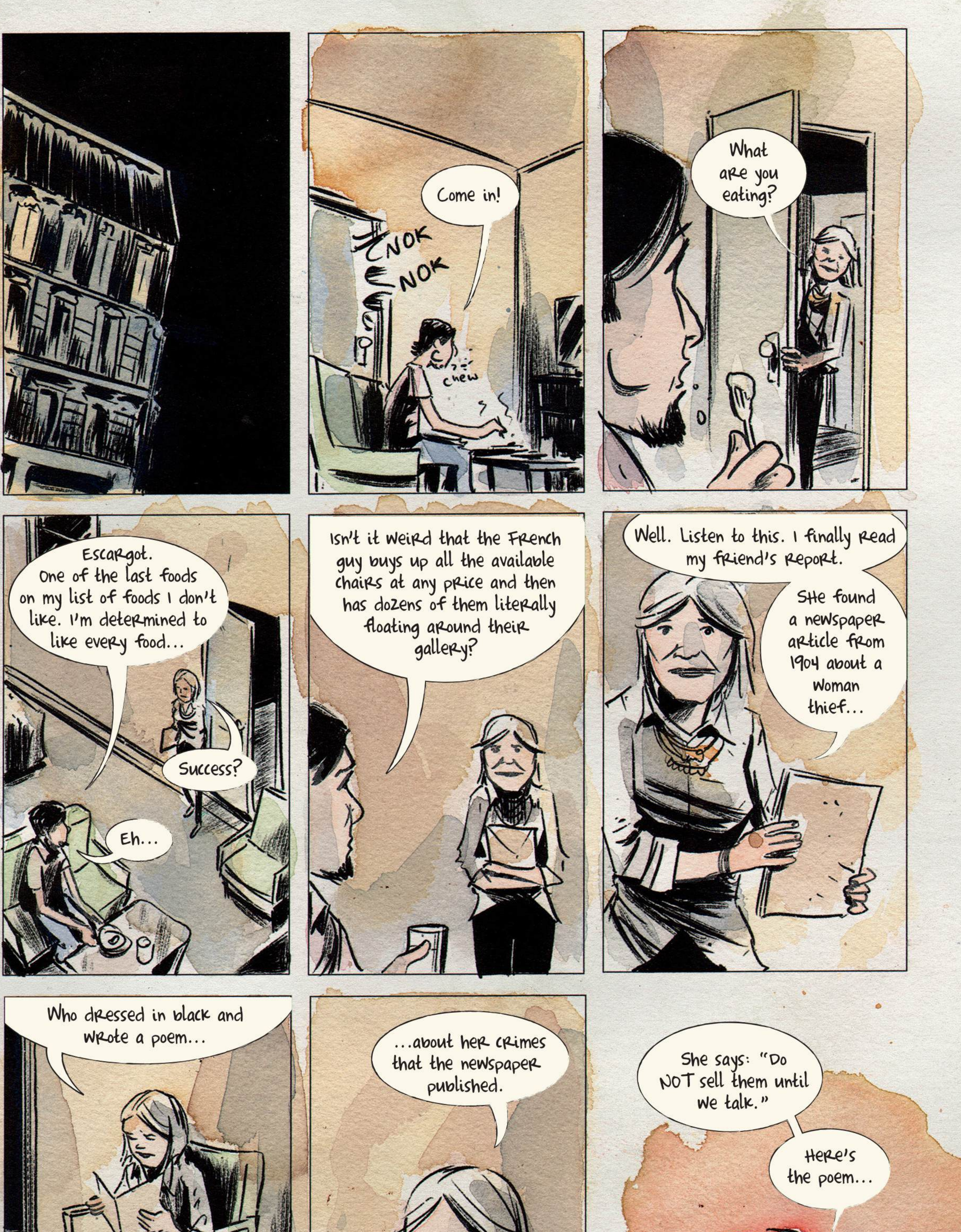
So what kind of frames are you looking for?
...Something worthy of your great-great-great-grandmother's lovely portrait...
So what about your books? What more could you possibly need to complete your collection?
And if you get another book, that means another shelf? Fine with me, I never begrudge you a book.
Well. A real collection is never complete. I saw online--there's a rumor that there's a copy of *Infinite Jest* with notes and edits handwritten in it by Cormac McCarthy.
Hey. That guy is looking at us.
Bonjour, monsieur. You were expecting me.
I am M. Vautour.
Welcome to the finest selection of antiquities in the arrondissement, in my opinion in all of Paris.

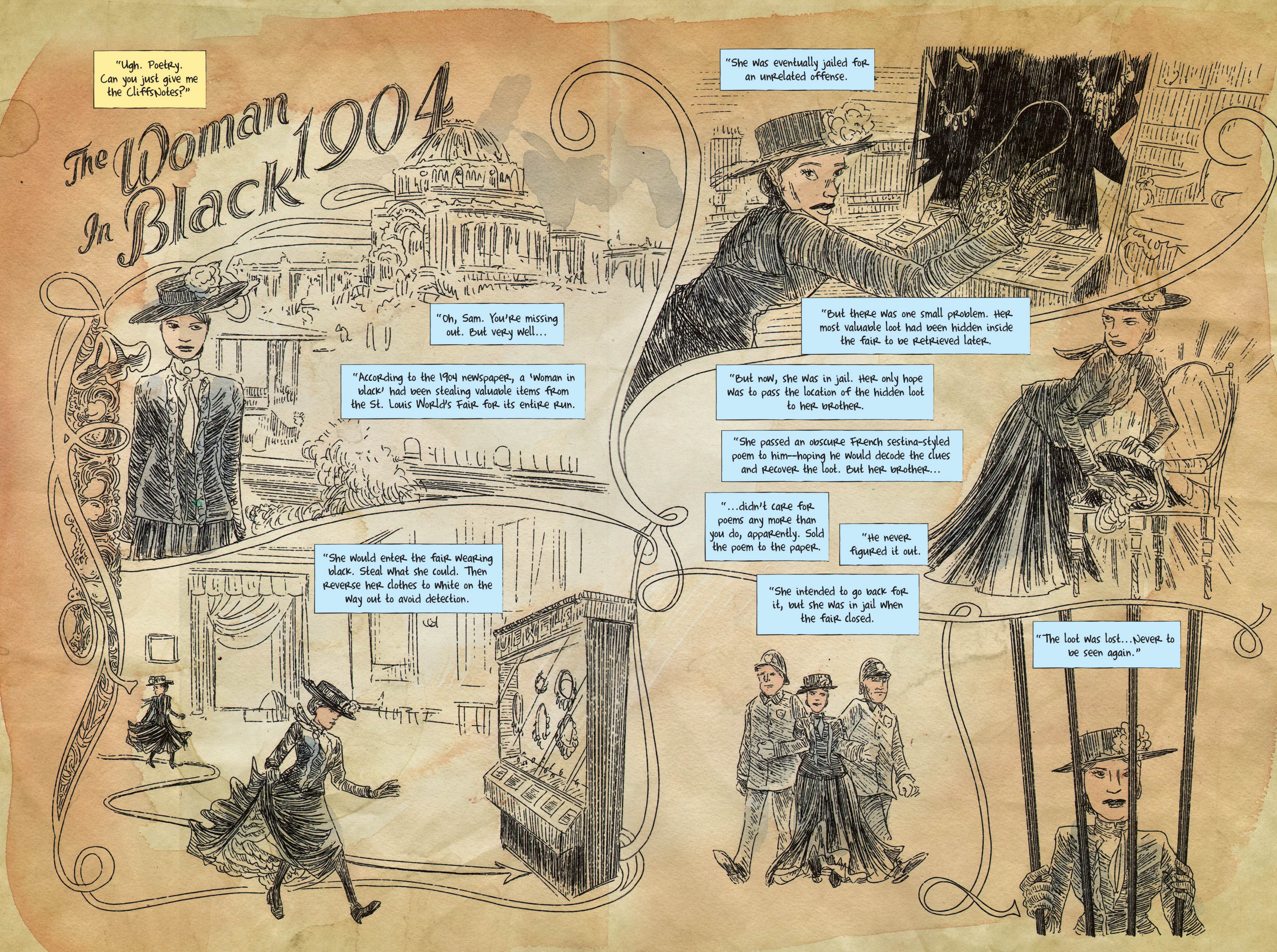

VRE
Okay if I--?
You go on. I'm hanging out here.
Good idea. You can see the shop from here and that is where I will be.
Oh-la-la!
I've never seen so many frames in one place--picture frames and chair frames as well!
Ah, madame has exquisite taste but a flair for the rare. Take your time, look around and see if you don't find something to delight you.
Surely you have just what I am looking for--a frame with carved ribbon twisted into a spiral--and I'll take any size.
Oh-h, this one! This gilt one. With the carved pearls, palmettes, and laurel…
And as if that were not enough eye candy, a cartouche with shield and coat of arms.
This is beyond anything ever seen in my country…
I want it.
My pleasure, madame. Would you like my assistant to arrange shipping?
Please, merci.
About the carved spiral ribbon motif…
Let us go next door and check the neighboring shop's inventory.
Are you sure you have time, monsieur?
My afternoon is yours, Mme Pearson.
It is my pleasure to be your guide.

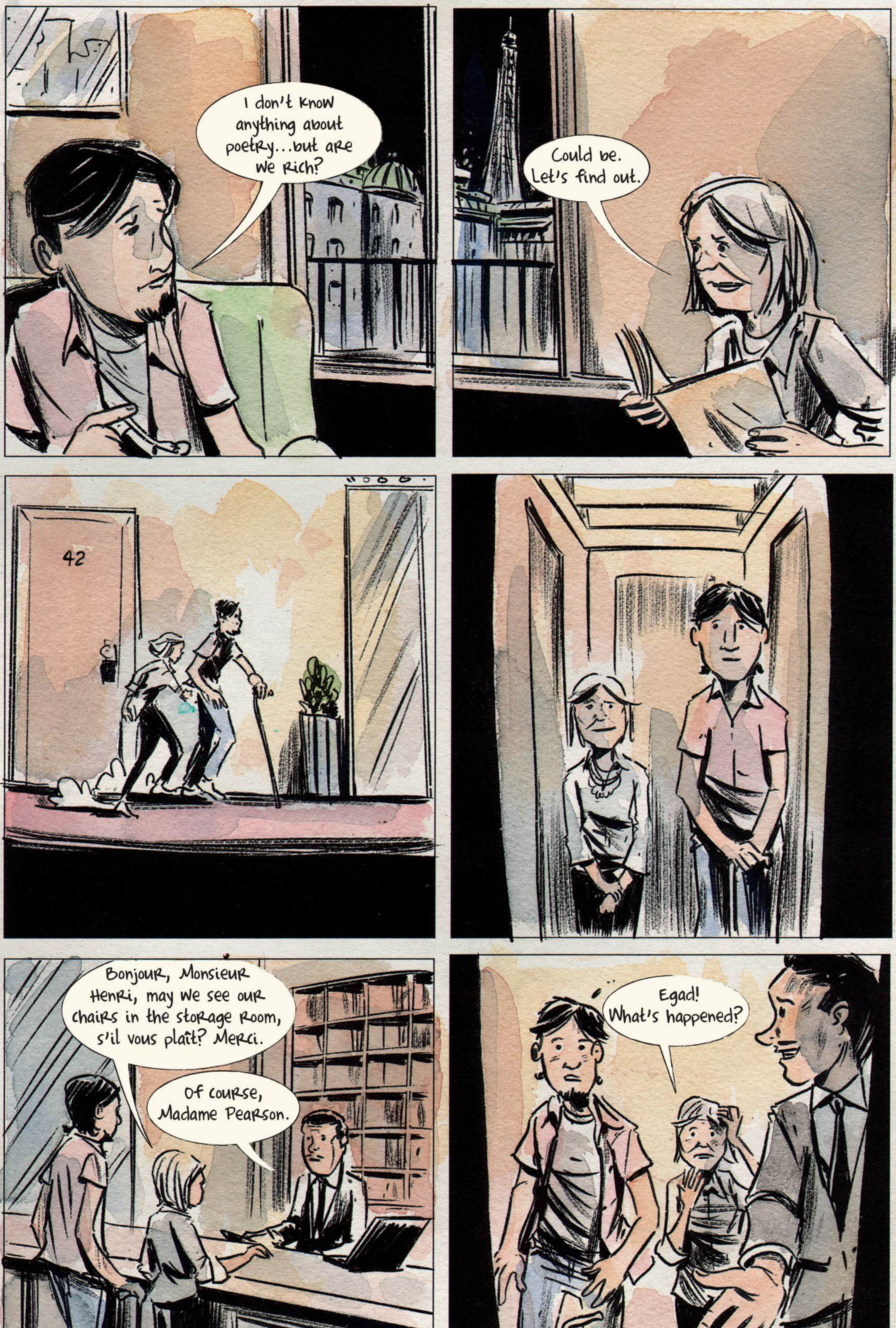



That was a long day.
But fruitful.

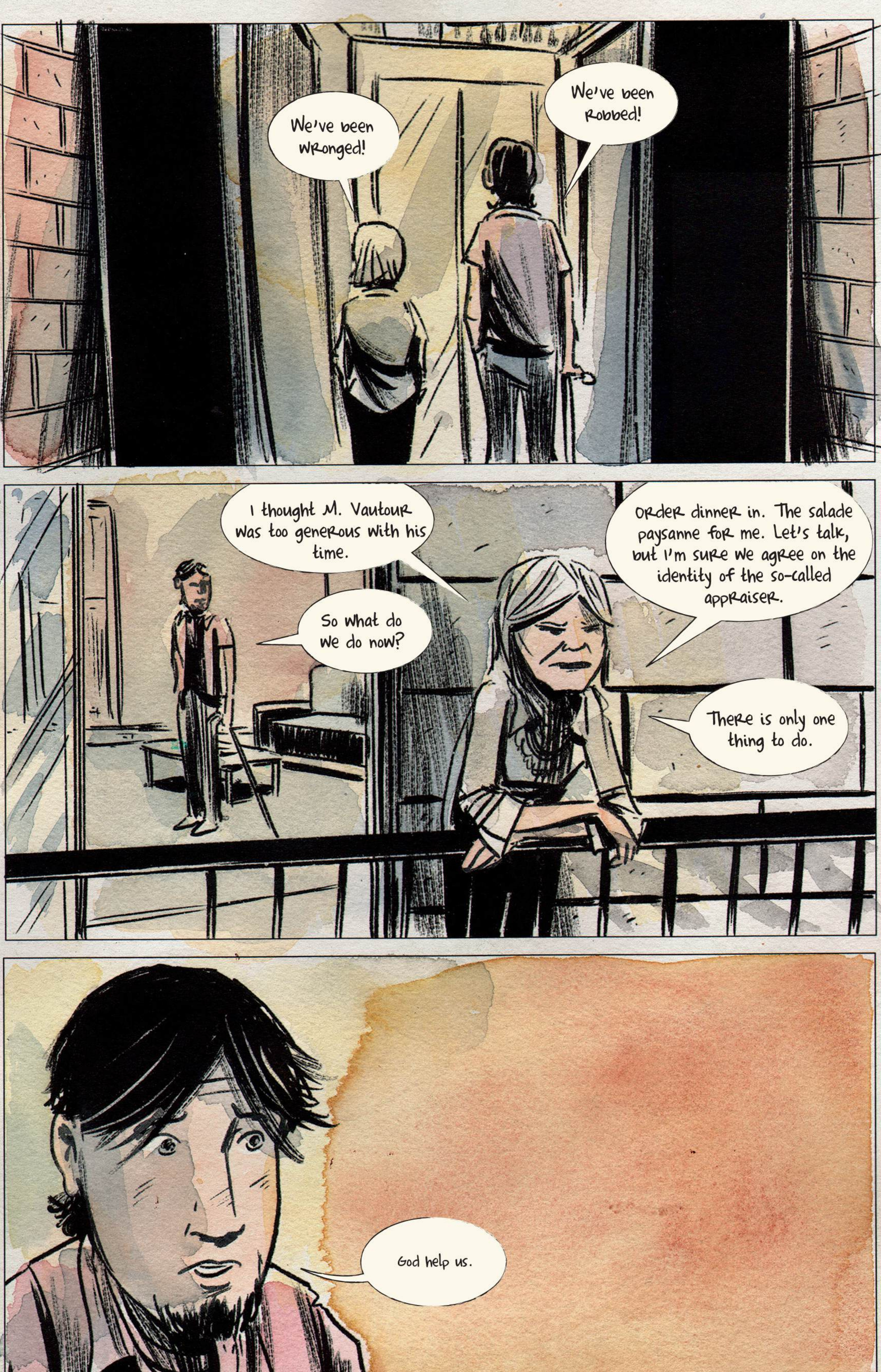

There's a metaphor in here somewhere.
So is this a metaphor too?
6,100 streets in Paris, and I once more cross your path. What are we hauling tomorrow?
Oh-- you again.


KNOK
KNOK
Come in!
chew
chew
What are you eating?
Escargot. One of the last foods on my list of foods I don't like. I'm determined to like every food…
Success?
Eh…
Isn't it weird that the French guy buys up all the available chairs at any price and then has dozens of them literally floating around their gallery?
Well. Listen to this. I finally read my friend's report.
She found a newspaper article from 1904 about a woman thief…
Who dressed in black and wrote a poem…
…about her crimes that the newspaper published.
She says: "Do NOT sell them until we talk."
Here's the poem…


"Ugh. Poetry. Can you just give me the CliffsNotes?"
The Woman In Black 1904
"Oh, Sam. You're missing out. But very well...
"According to the 1904 newspaper, a 'Woman in black' had been stealing valuable items from the St. Louis World's Fair for its entire run.
"She would enter the fair wearing black. Steal what she could. Then reverse her clothes to white on the way out to avoid detection.
"She was eventually jailed for an unrelated offense.
"But there was one small problem. Her most valuable loot had been hidden inside the fair to be retrieved later.
"But now, she was in jail. Her only hope was to pass the location of the hidden loot to her brother.
"She passed an obscure French sestina-styled poem to him--hoping he would decode the clues and recover the loot. But her brother...
"...didn't care for poems any more than you do, apparently. Sold the poem to the paper.
"He never figured it out.
"She intended to go back for it, but she was in jail when the fair closed.
"The loot was lost...Never to be seen again."

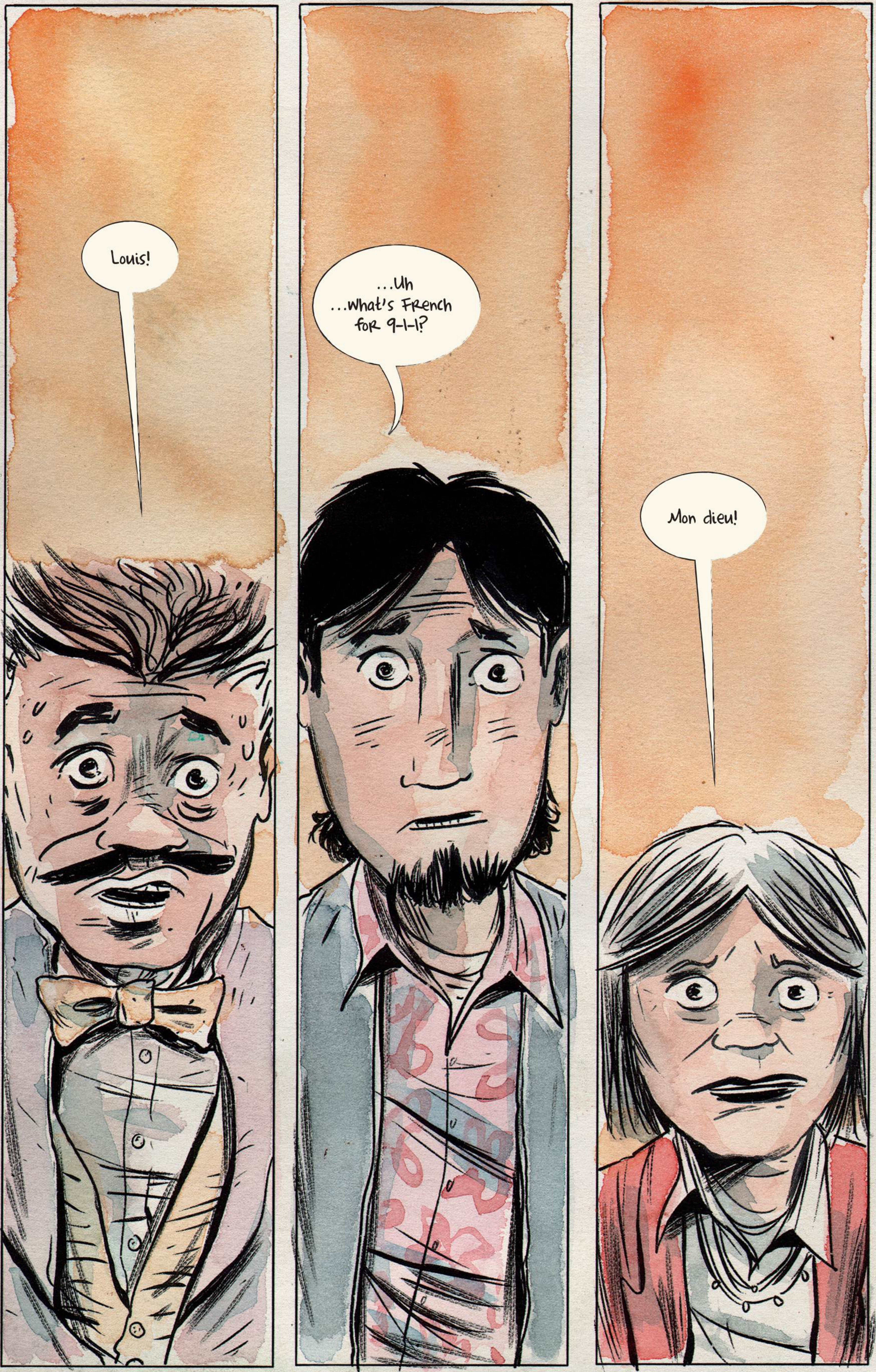

I don't know anything about poetry...but are we rich?
Could be. Let's find out.
42
Bonjour, Monsieur Henri, may we see our chairs in the storage room, s'il vous plaît? Merci.
Of course, Madame Pearson.
Egad! What's happened?

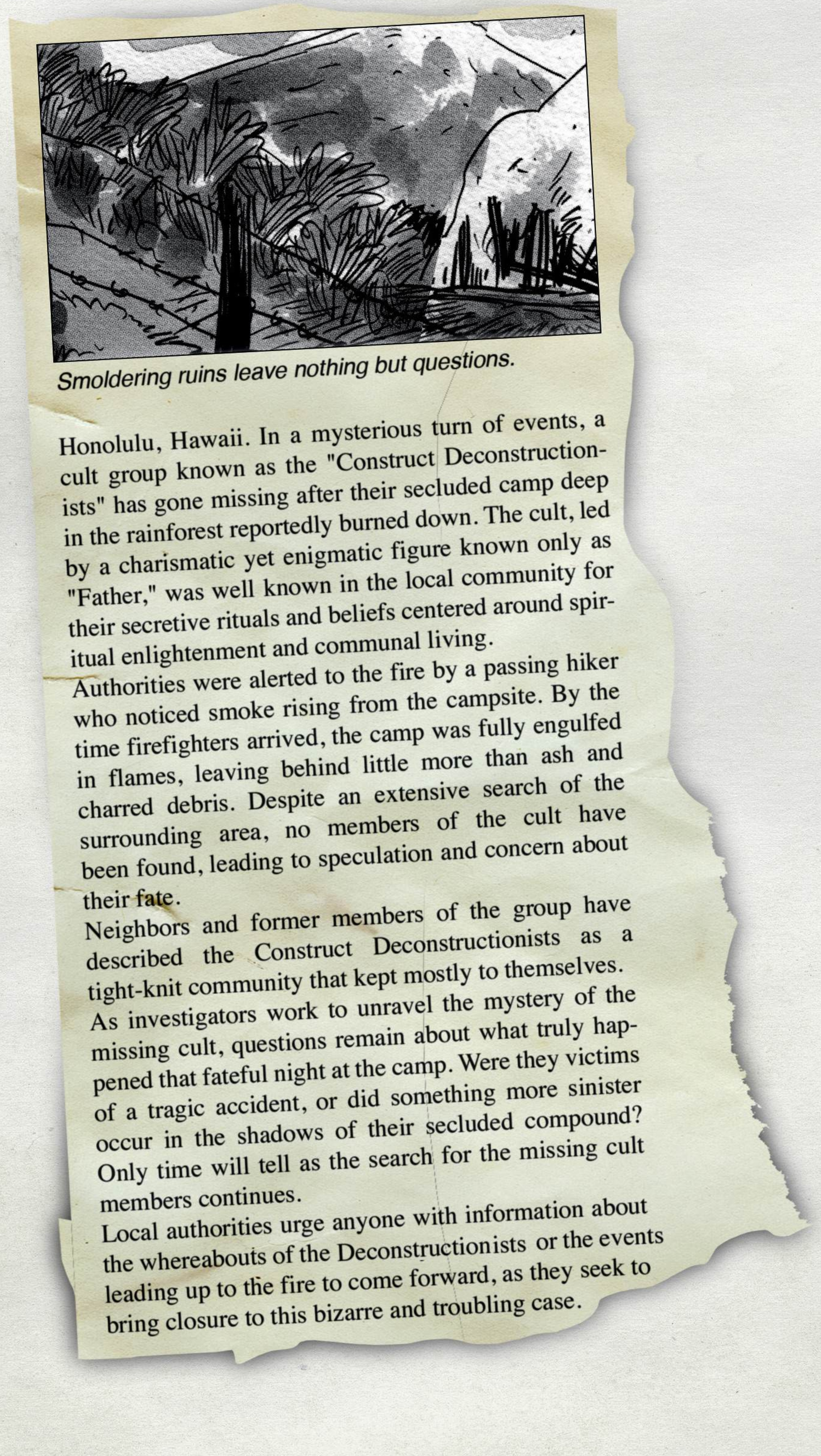
Well, it looks like someone murdered your chairs.
I'm so sorry, madame--I cannot explain this. No one has been to the room since I unlocked it for the appraiser you sent to assess them.
Appraiser?
We sent no appraiser.
I am sorry, madame. He seemed very official. He mentioned you by name...


We've been wronged!
We've been robbed!
I thought M. Vautour was too generous with his time.
So what do we do now?
Order dinner in. The salade paysanne for me. Let's talk, but I'm sure we agree on the identity of the so-called appraiser.
There is only one thing to do.
God help us.

the
Next Morning

Here so early for your appointment?
Oh, you surprised us, monsieur.
We thought maybe we could squeak in early...an American thing, I guess.
We were about to knock.
Allow me...


Louis!
...Uh ...what's French for 9-1-1?
Mon dieu!



Smoldering ruins leave nothing but questions.

Honolulu, Hawaii. In a mysterious turn of events, a cult group known as the "Construct Deconstructionists" has gone missing after their secluded camp deep in the rainforest reportedly burned down. The cult, led by a charismatic yet enigmatic figure known only as "Father," was well known in the local community for their secretive rituals and beliefs centered around spiritual enlightenment and communal living.

Authorities were alerted to the fire by a passing hiker who noticed smoke rising from the campsite. By the time firefighters arrived, the camp was fully engulfed in flames, leaving behind little more than ash and charred debris. Despite an extensive search of the surrounding area, no members of the cult have been found, leading to speculation and concern about their fate.

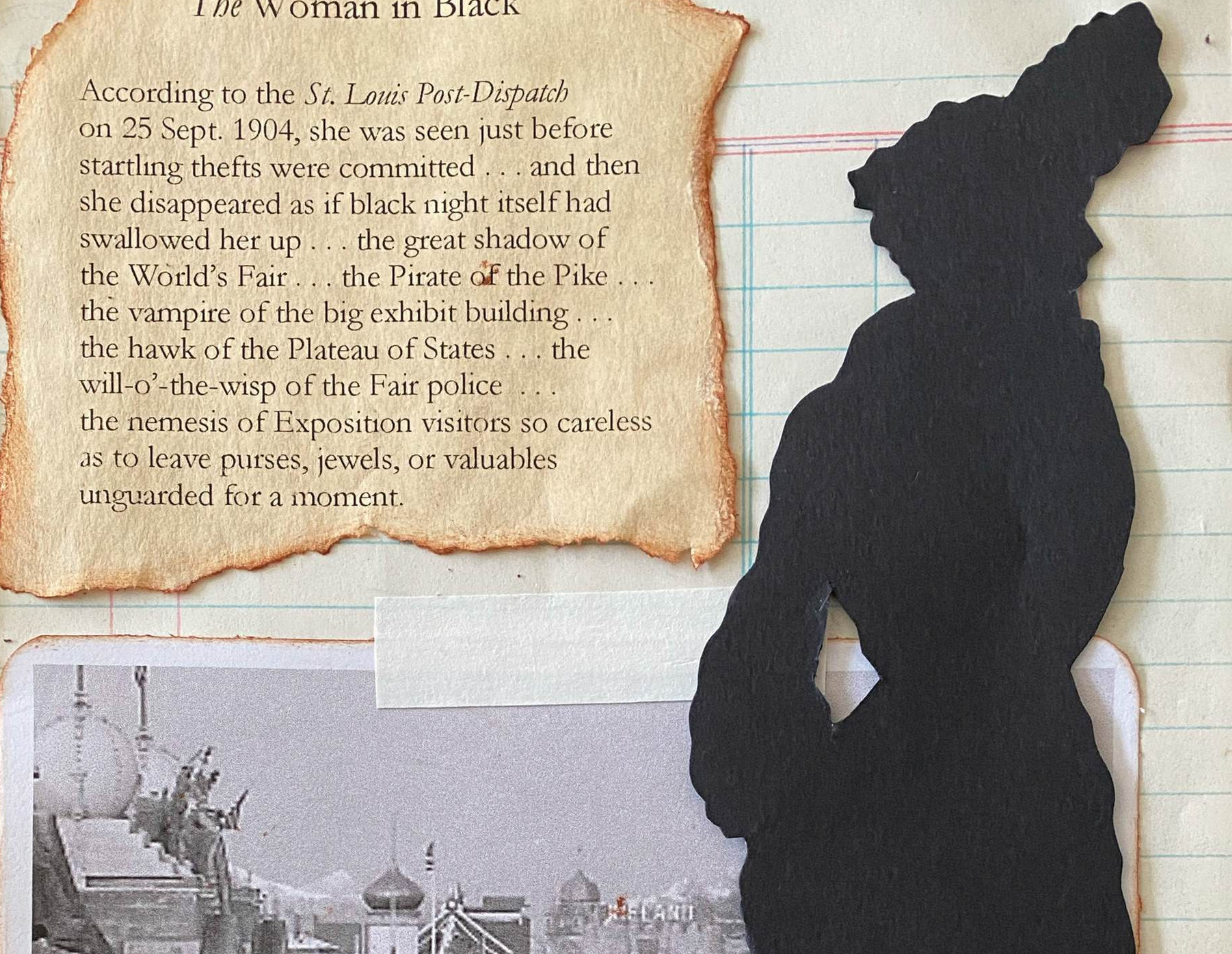
Neighbors and former members of the group have described the Construct Deconstructionists as a tight-knit community that kept mostly to themselves.

As investigators work to unravel the mystery of the missing cult, questions remain about what truly happened that fateful night at the camp. Were they victims of a tragic accident, or did something more sinister occur in the shadows of their secluded compound? Only time will tell as the search for the missing cult members continues.

Local authorities urge anyone with information about the whereabouts of the Deconstructionists or the events leading up to the fire to come forward, as they seek to bring closure to this bizarre and troubling case.

The Woman in Black

According to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* on 25 Sept. 1904, she was seen just before startling thefts were committed . . . and then she disappeared as if black night itself had swallowed her up . . . the great shadow of the World's Fair . . . the Pirate of the Pike . . . the vampire of the big exhibit building . . . the hawk of the Plateau of States . . . the will-o'-the-wisp of the Fair police . . . the nemesis of Exposition visitors so careless as to leave purses, jewels, or valuables unguarded for a moment.



The woman in black was credited with the disappearance of jewels and cash valued at $330,000 in today's money and everyone was on the lookout for her. Officers of the Fair, the uniformed police, the Jefferson Guard, plain-clothes detectives, the custodians of buildings, guides, and roller-chair boys all kept an eye out for her, but in vain—the only clew a woman in black, but hundreds of women in black were at the Fair every day.

The sestina is a form of French Provençal poetry developed by troubadours between the 11th-13th centuries. The structure contains six six-line stanzas with a three-line ending called an envoi. Only six different words are used at the end of each line in a preconceived pattern, but the envoi use three of the end words—one at the end of each line and one of the three remaining end words within each line, according to a specific pattern.

ABCDEF
FAEBDC
CFDABE
ECBFAD
DEACFB
BDFECA
ECA or ACE with BDF within each line of the envoi

POSTES
0,80
FRANCE
PICASSO
PAUL EN ARLEQUIN
EUROPA
1975
FORGET

REPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
POSTES
2,00
GANDON 1973
WATTEAU

1,00
POSTES
REPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
GANDON

REPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
1,00
POSTES 1968
AUGUSTE RENOIR

Black and White

Designers knew they would build the jewel of all jewels,
As they accepted from Paris the Fair mantle.
In 1904 the portals swung wide and guests were ushered in
By ten thousand pipes from the organ in Festival Hall.
And hundreds of grand palaces, bridges, and statues of staff,
While planners gazed from towers, watching their effort bear fruit.

We indulged on ice cream cones, fairy floss, and peculiar fruit.
Illuminated bulbs—deep red, bright green, crystalline white jewels—
Silhouetted glow-at-night-white palaces of elaborately molded staff,
Like rubies, emeralds, and diamonds through the deep night's mantle.
"Under the Bamboo Tree" wafted o'er cascades in front of the Hall,
While gondolas floated the lagoon to its southern edge by Inside Inn.

DRAFT

REPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
Femme à l'ombrelle
E. BOUDIN (1824-1898)
5,00

ÉLISABETH VIGÉE-LEBRUN
RF
AUTOPORTRAIT
1755-1842
LA POSTE 2002
1,02 €

Then came a nemesis of those with valuables unguarded, a woman in
Black they dubbed me, described down to my lunchbox of fruit.
They almost caught me with diamonds, so I ducked into a palace hall,
In a peach I hid gems, fruit of another texture hid the most jewels.
With an outer skirt of black, underneath white and reversible mantle,
Into a washroom, a flip, then a woman in white unnoticed by staff.

’Twas my joy to vex them, the Jefferson Guard and all the staff.
Woman in white strode out tho the Pirate of the Pike had slipped in.
Concealed within my fabric a silken pocket deep within the mantle.
I peeled a peach, spit out its stone, just a lady devouring a fruit.
Guards patrolled the exits, but I had already secreted the jewels,
And passed as the night swallowed me and treasures from every hall.

Accept a match of wits—uncover treasure stole from palace and hall.
It might be worth your trouble for one foolish member of the staff
Took off and lay down her rings—just one day’s booty of jewels!
Uncover the trove and filch Queen Victoria’s cup, pour a toast in
And drink of a state wine, snagged from an exhibit of orchard fruit.
The thrill was the quest—’tis now yours but to seize the mantle.

REPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
15F
POSTES
FLORALIES PARISIENNES 1959

Last evening fireworks burst in a sky looking o’er a snow mantle.
Illumination drew dark . . . doors shut on each palace and hall,
Though by Fair’s end my labor had richly born fruit.
We bid farewell and left behind structures of all-to-ephemeral staff
That would soon be demolished, buried or dragged away in
Weeks—yet my infamy would live, the thief of treasures and jewels.

Unto you I offer clews and mantle; start with French Pavilion staff—
Turn away from every palace, each hall, and remnants of Inside Inn.
Be clever, and fruit will bear fruit; then you shall clutch the jewels.

—Woman in Black
1904

EDITH PIAF
FOREVER

Selkirk Auction September, 2022

The gilt frames
are what
sold me on
these fauteuils.

As soon as I
saw them, I
knew they were
going home
with me. —

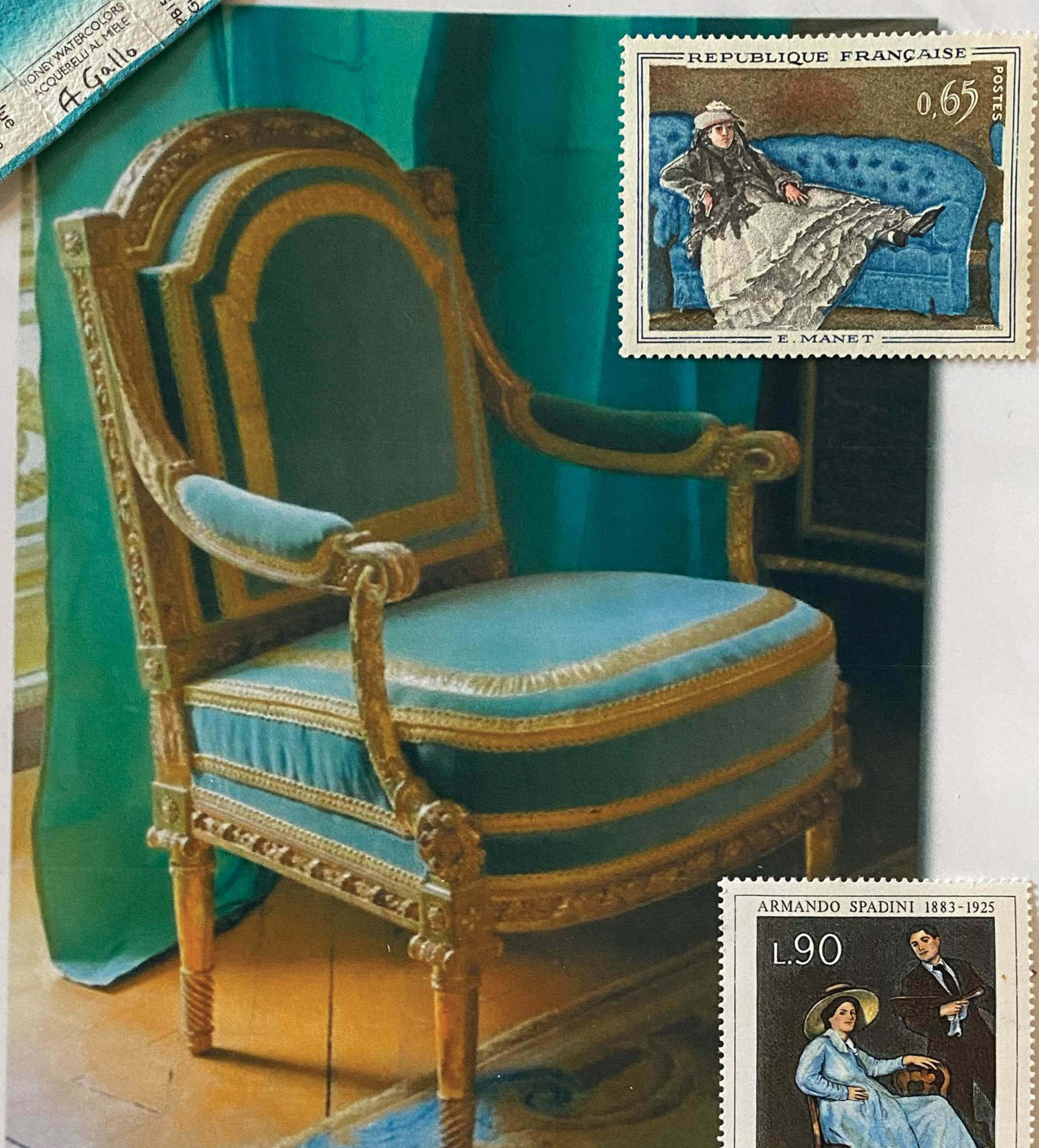
6 October 2022

Bonjour,

These fauteuils were made around 1900, after a model by Georges Jacob—with some variations. The original model being today in the palace of Versailles.

Best regards,

Teal blue
Blu turchese
HONEY WATERCOLORS
ACQUERELLI AL MIELE
A Gallo
PB15:3, PG7, PW6
Gum arabic binder
230 Series 2
agallocolors.com
Handmade in Ital


REPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
0,65
POSTES
E. MANET
ARMANDO SPADINI 1883-1925
L.90
ITALIA
I.P.S. ROMA 1975
T. MELE INC.

guilloches

signed

Marie Antoinette's armchair from the Palace of Versailles. It was made by French cabinet maker Georges Jacob (1739-1814). This pastel blue & yellow gold chair was kept in the Queen's private Gold Cabinet room. **Visit upload.wikimedia.org**

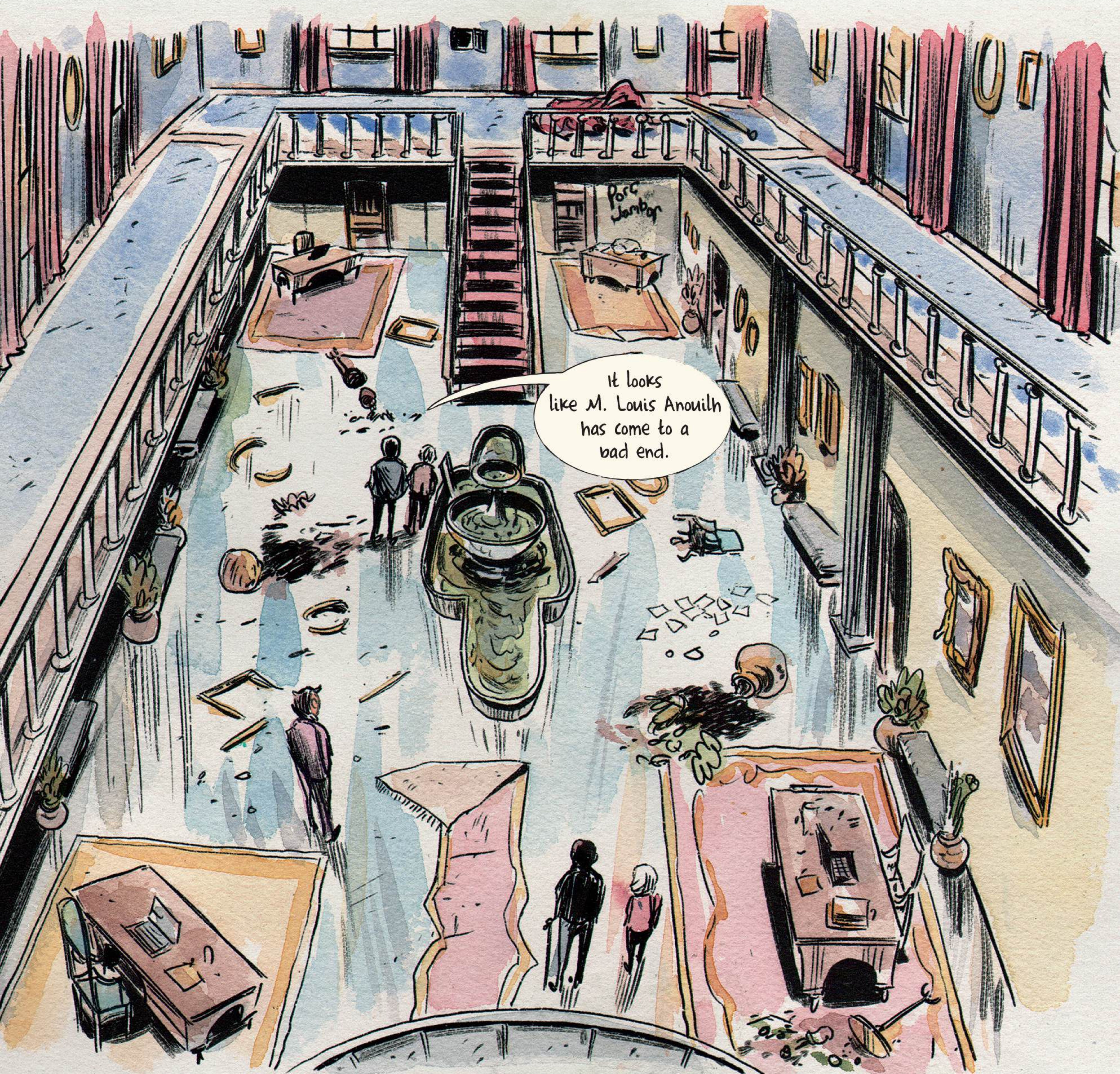
t[illegible]llises
basketwork
floral forms
rustic garlands

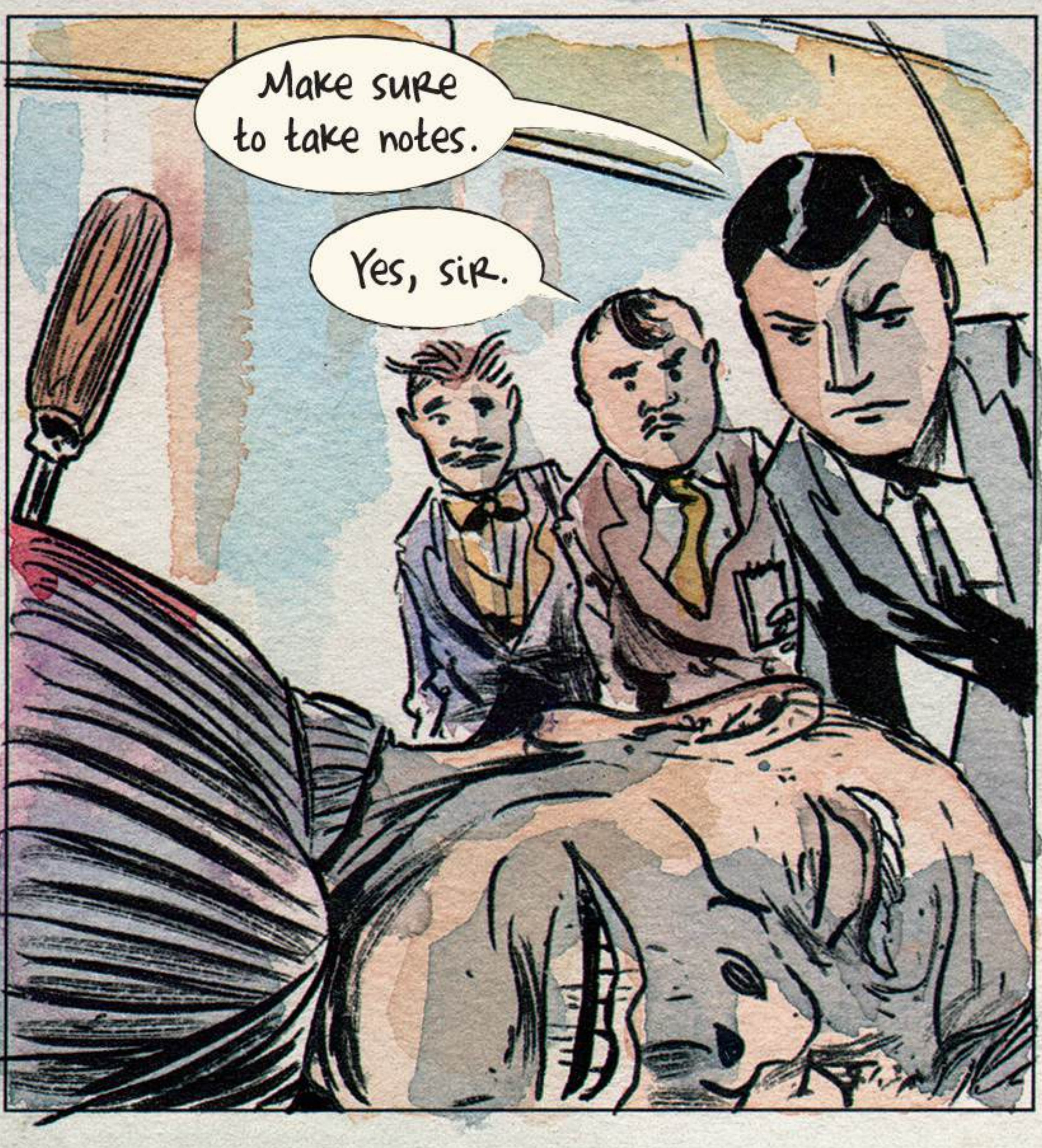
"wheat-ear" furniture, so named for lily-of-the-valley, pine cones, ears of wheat found in the design.

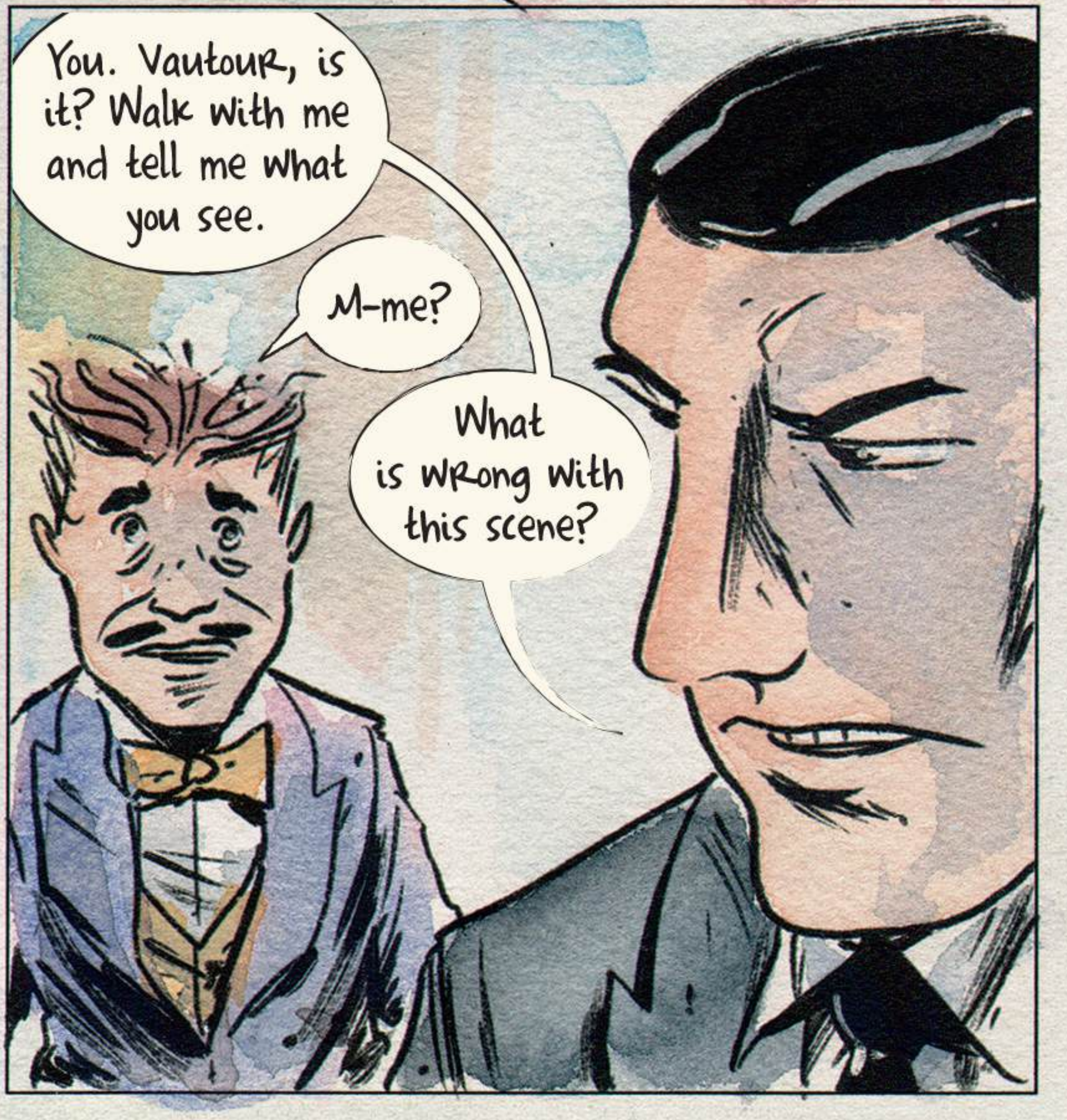
Two

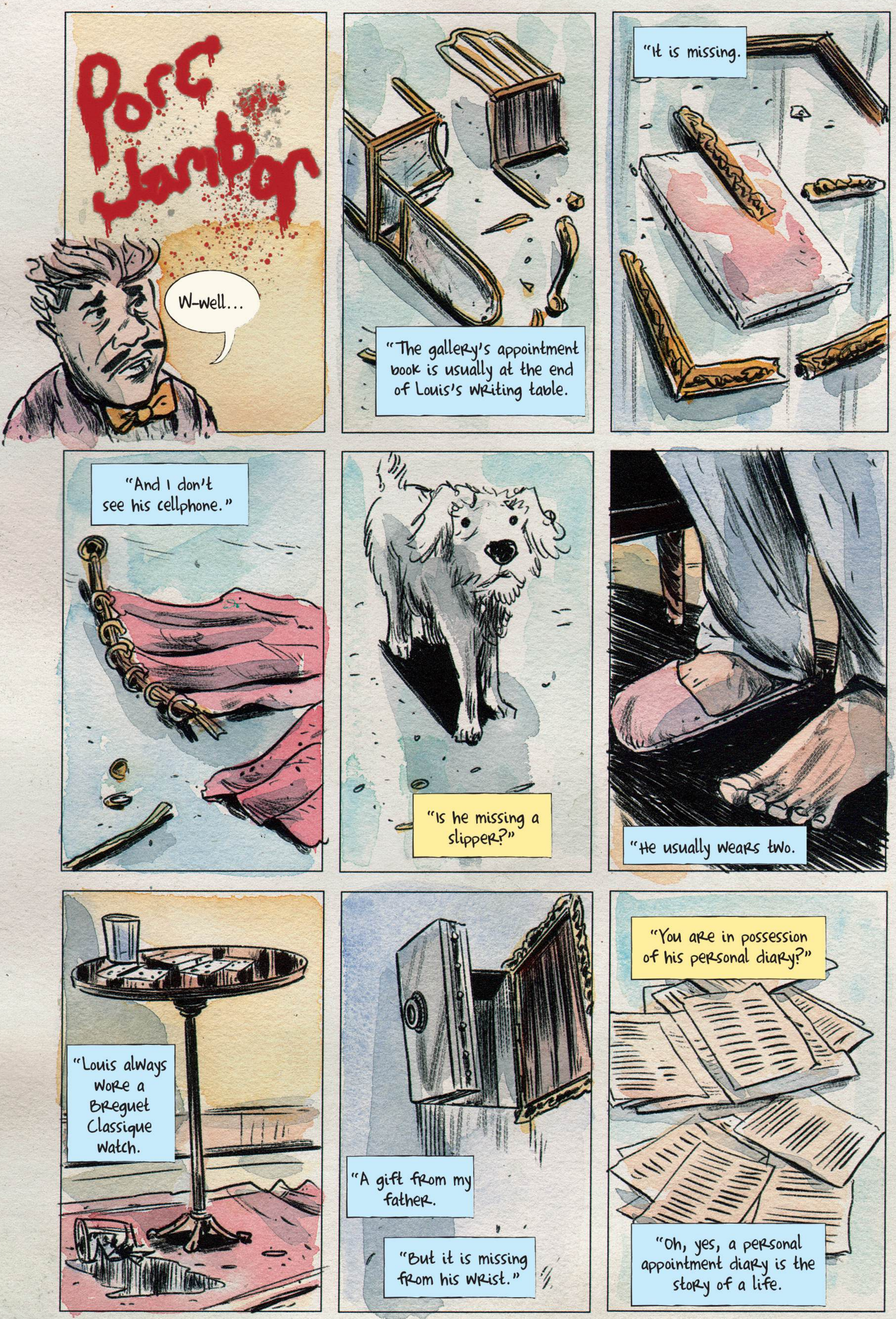
PART
TWO

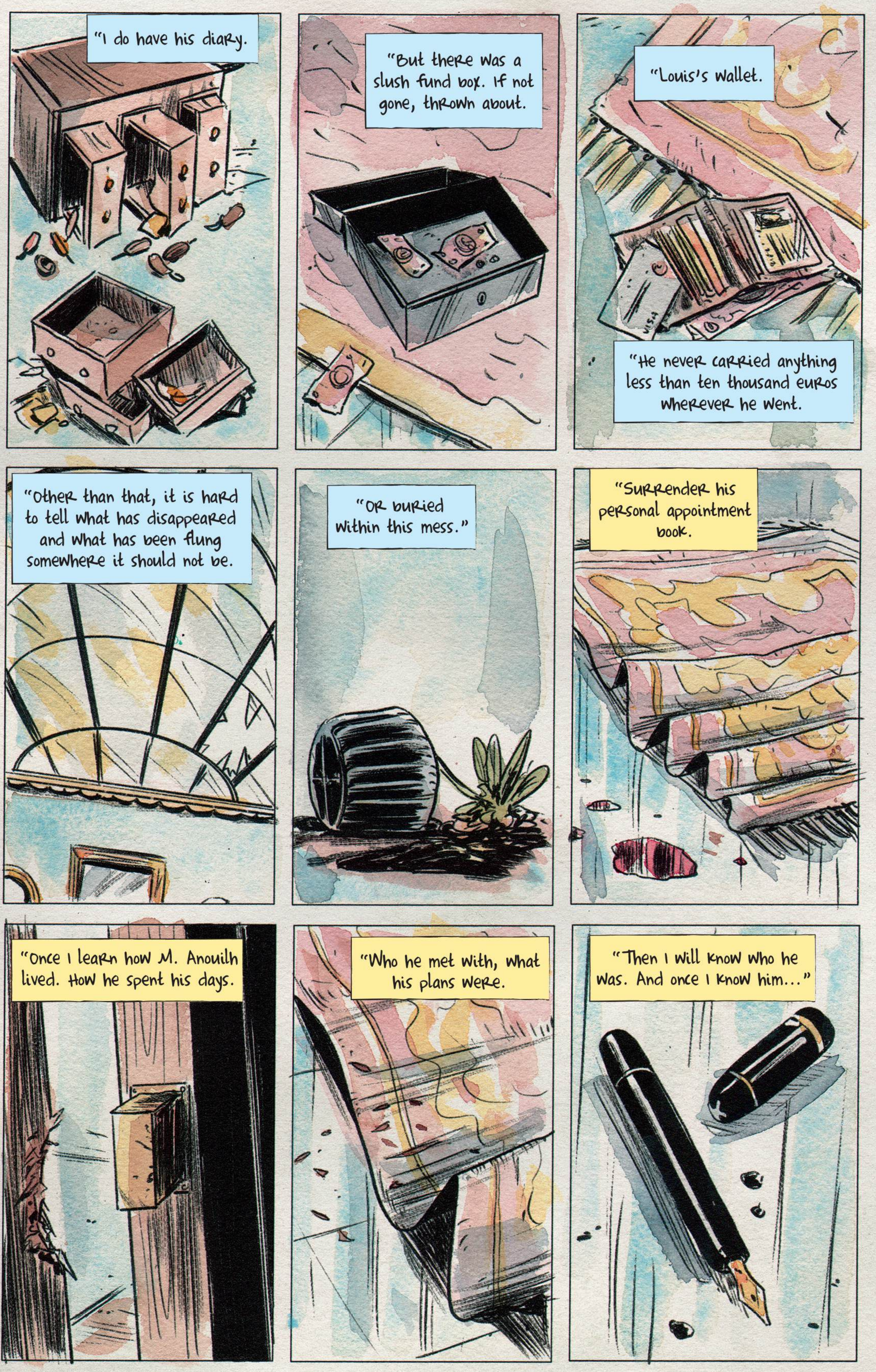
INSPECTOR VAILLANT
Sacrebleu
Cadieux?
Yes, Inspector?


Porc Jambon
It looks like M. Louis Anouilh has come to a bad end.

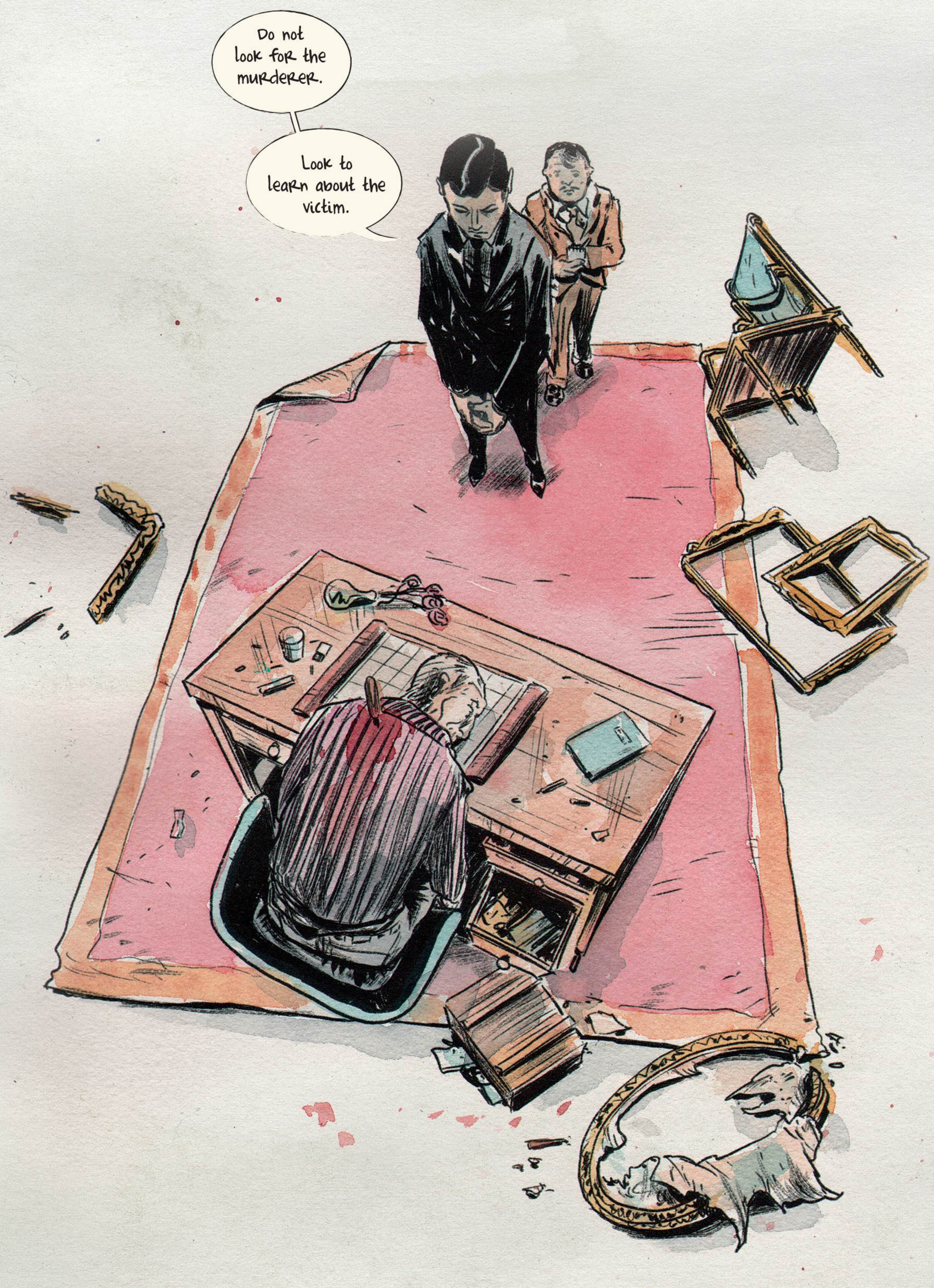

Make sure to take notes.
Yes, sir.


You. Vautour, is it? Walk with me and tell me what you see.
M-me?
What is wrong with this scene?

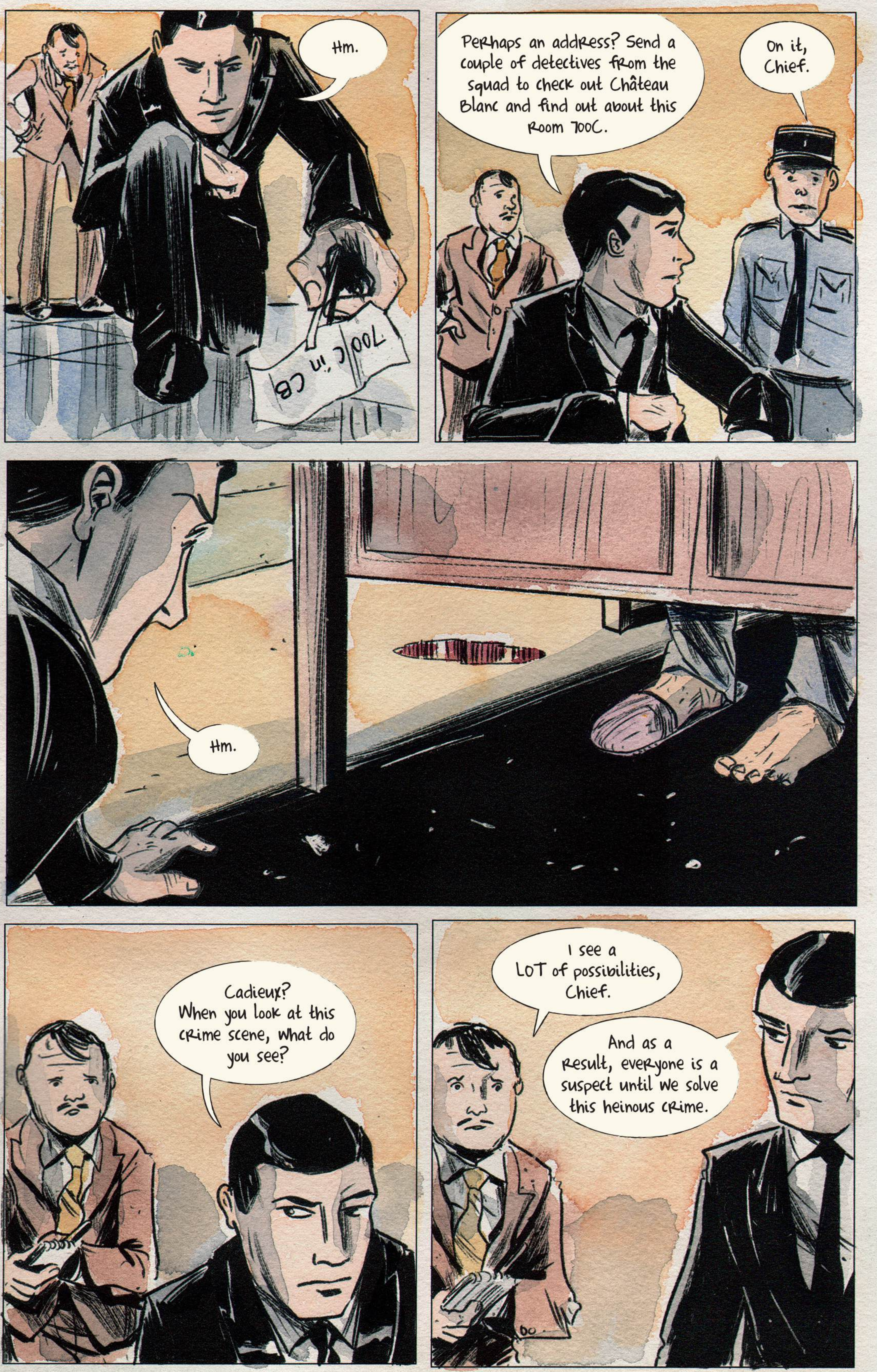

Porc Jambon
W-well…
"The gallery's appointment book is usually at the end of Louis's writing table.
"It is missing.
"And I don't see his cellphone."
"Is he missing a slipper?"
"He usually wears two.
"Louis always wore a Breguet Classique watch.
"A gift from my father.
"But it is missing from his wrist."
"You are in possession of his personal diary?"
"Oh, yes, a personal appointment diary is the story of a life.


"I do have his diary.
"But there was a slush fund box. If not gone, thrown about.
"Louis's wallet.
VISA
"He never carried anything less than ten thousand euros wherever he went.
"Other than that, it is hard to tell what has disappeared and what has been flung somewhere it should not be.
"Or buried within this mess."
"Surrender his personal appointment book.
"Once I learn how M. Anouilh lived. How he spent his days.
"Who he met with, what his plans were.
"Then I will know who he was. And once I know him..."

Business Records
Sitting Room
East Gallery
Private Bathroom
Porc Jambor
Main ShowRoom
Entrance
...I will know who killed him.
Kitchen
Upper Gallery
Bathroom
Storage Room
Frame Workshop
Vautour's Office
West Gallery

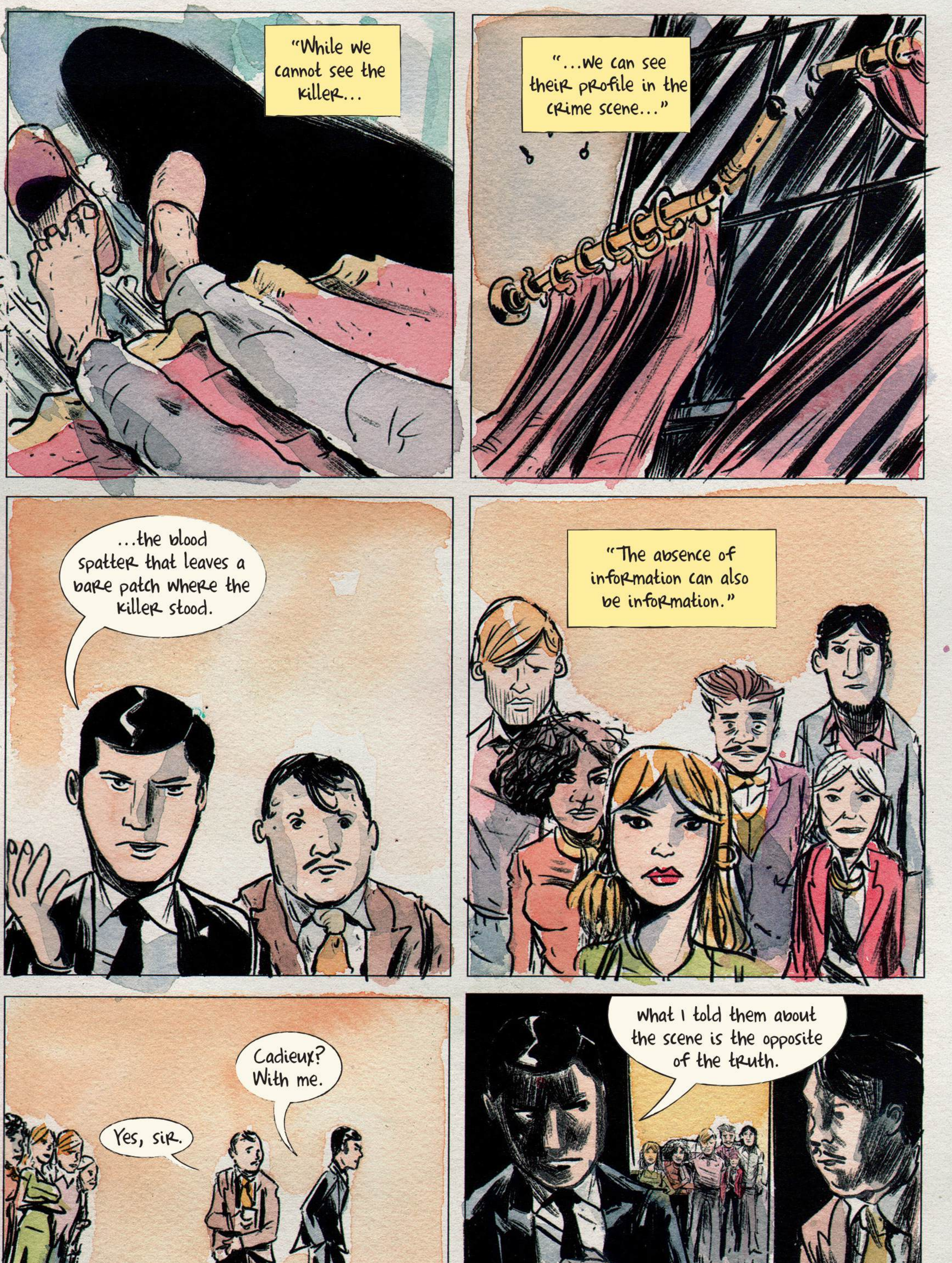

Do not look for the murderer.
Look to learn about the victim.

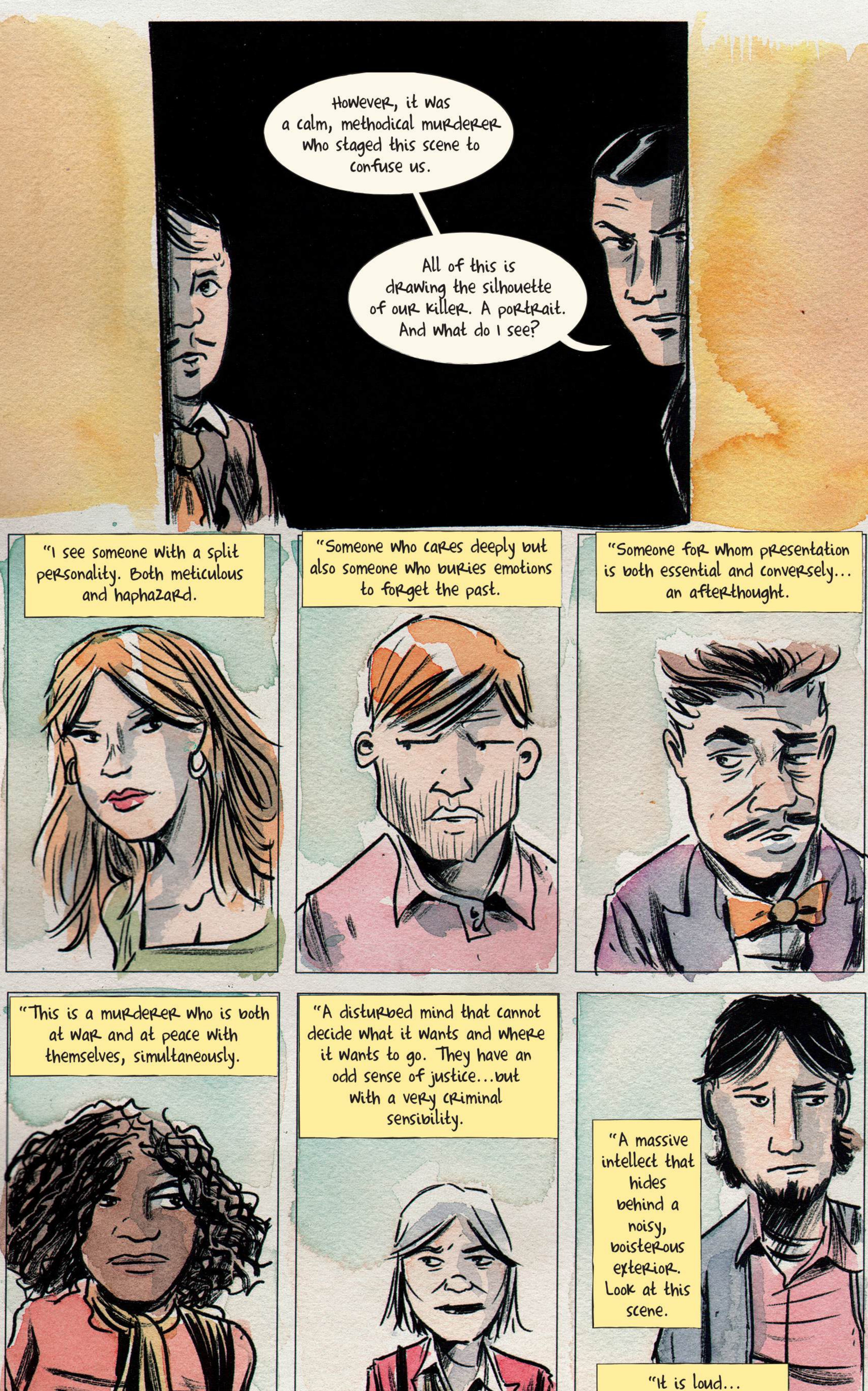
It's okay...
Are you the reason Auntie won those chairs?
Wha...!
Father!
Shush and come no further! Mesdemoiselles, the gallery is closed today.
Inspector, s'il vous plaît, let them come in...they are my daughter and our assistant.
Absolutely not--
It's okay. Let them be.

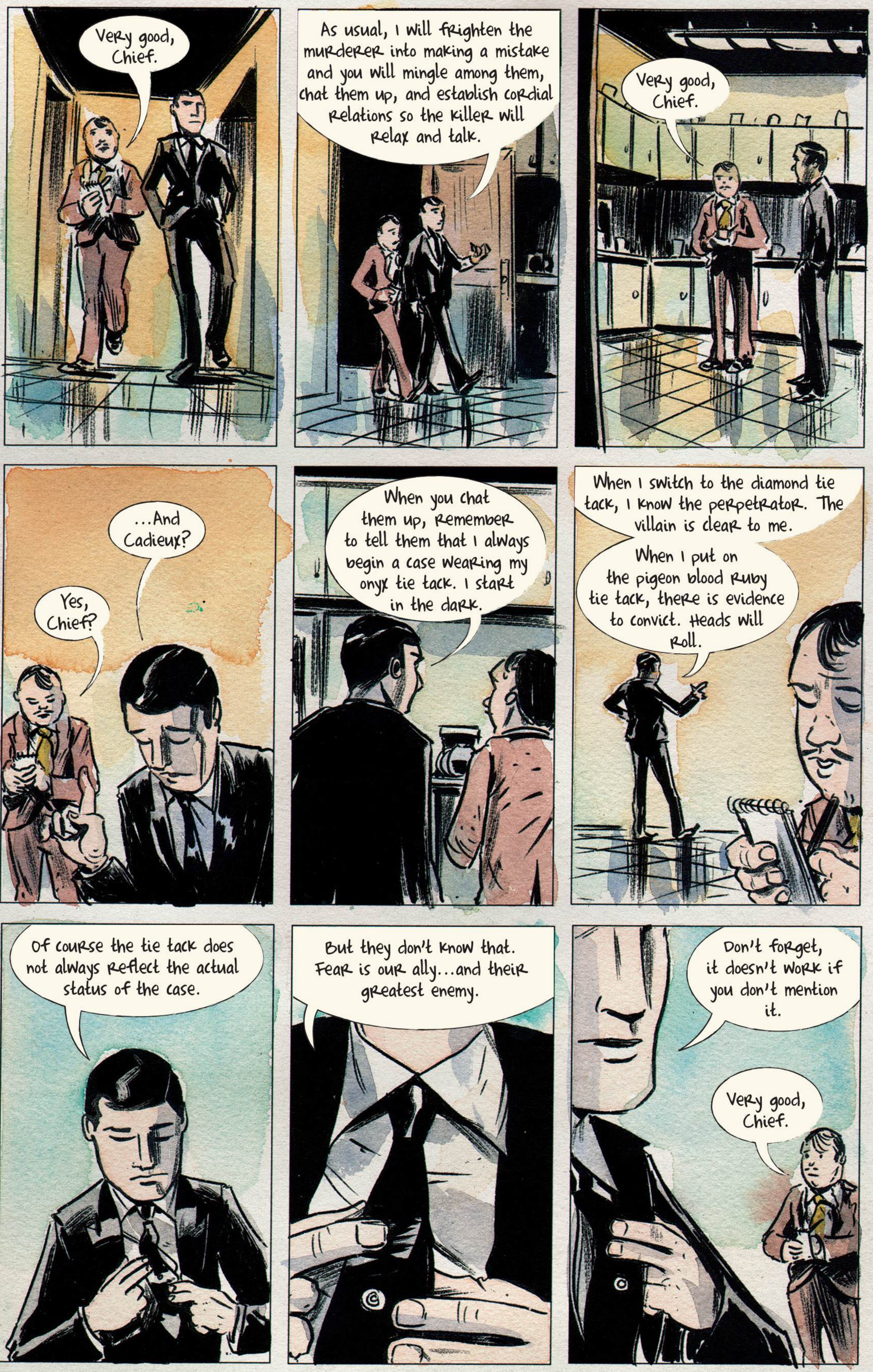

Hm.
700C in CB
Perhaps an address? Send a couple of detectives from the squad to check out Château Blanc and find out about this Room 700C.
On it, Chief.
Hm.
Cadieux? When you look at this crime scene, what do you see?
I see a LOT of possibilities, Chief.
And as a result, everyone is a suspect until we solve this heinous crime.

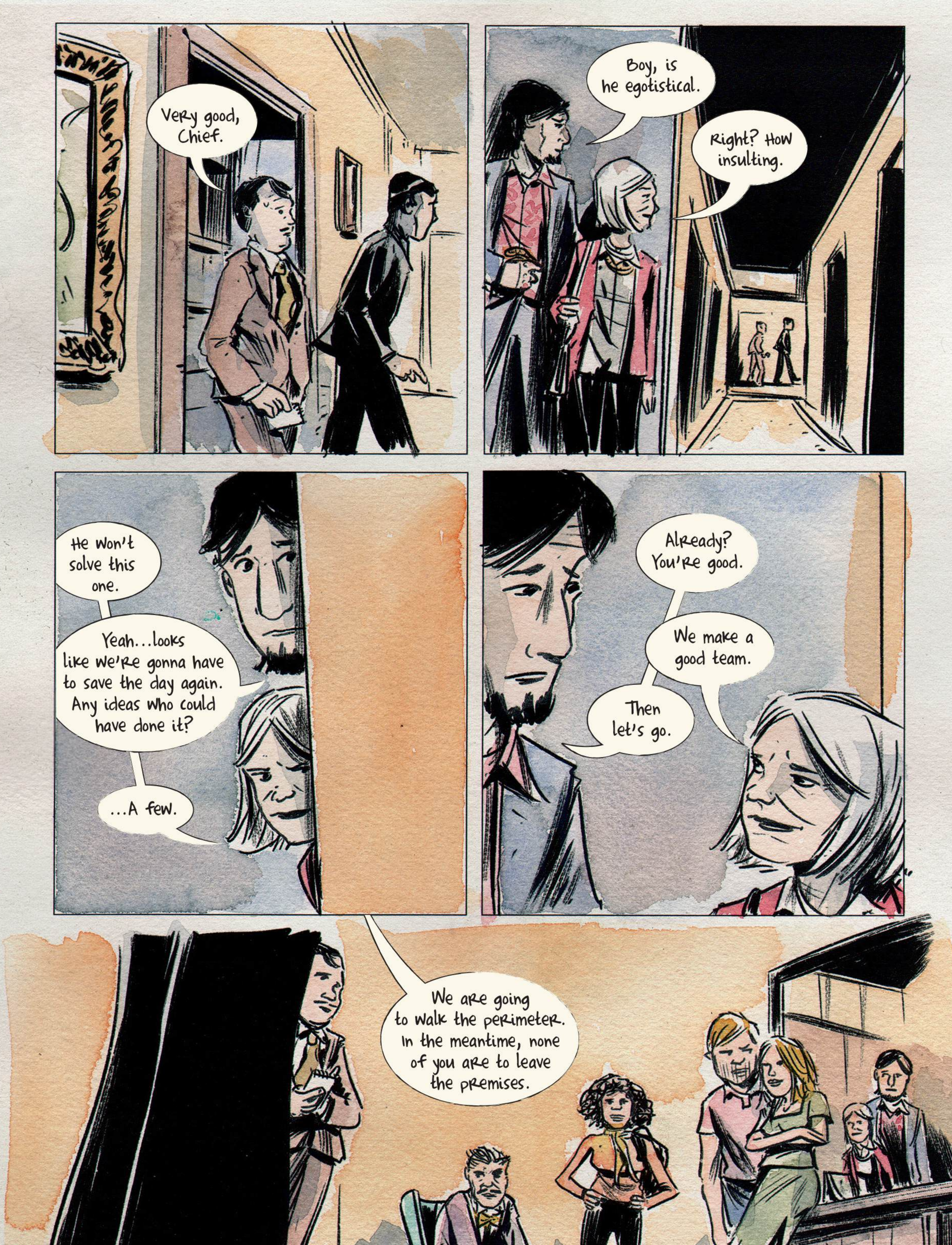
Murderer, if you are among us, I am talking to you...
I am coming for you.
I will learn all about your past and how you think. I will rattle your inner self until it will be a relief for you to be found out...
I will--?
Who are you?
Ah...
A-Aldo.

I c-came when c-called.
I called him. He's my fiancé.
As I was saying...
"We are looking at the shadows on Plato's cave wall.
"This scene is the symptom of a sick mind.
"A violent criminal filled with impotent rage.
"The scene is the shadow of the criminal. Their silhouette.


"While we cannot see the killer…
"…we can see their profile in the crime scene…"
…the blood spatter that leaves a bare patch where the killer stood.
"The absence of information can also be information."
Cadieux? With me.
Yes, sir.
What I told them about the scene is the opposite of the truth.
A clever mind wants us to think this is the crime of a raging, chaotic mind.


However, it was a calm, methodical murderer who staged this scene to confuse us.
All of this is drawing the silhouette of our killer. A portrait. And what do I see?
"I see someone with a split personality. Both meticulous and haphazard.
"Someone who cares deeply but also someone who buries emotions to forget the past.
"Someone for whom presentation is both essential and conversely... an afterthought.
"This is a murderer who is both at war and at peace with themselves, simultaneously.
"A disturbed mind that cannot decide what it wants and where it wants to go. They have an odd sense of justice...but with a very criminal sensibility.
"A massive intellect that hides behind a noisy, boisterous exterior. Look at this scene.
"It is loud... but says... NOTHING."


Very good, Chief.
As usual, I will frighten the murderer into making a mistake and you will mingle among them, chat them up, and establish cordial relations so the killer will relax and talk.
Very good, Chief.
...And Cadieux?
Yes, Chief?
When you chat them up, remember to tell them that I always begin a case wearing my onyx tie tack. I start in the dark.
When I switch to the diamond tie tack, I know the perpetrator. The villain is clear to me.
When I put on the pigeon blood ruby tie tack, there is evidence to convict. Heads will roll.
Of course the tie tack does not always reflect the actual status of the case.
But they don't know that. Fear is our ally...and their greatest enemy.
Don't forget, it doesn't work if you don't mention it.
Very good, Chief.


Very good, Chief.
Boy, is he egotistical.
Right? How insulting.
He won't solve this one.
Yeah...looks like we're gonna have to save the day again. Any ideas who could have done it?
...A few.
Already? You're good.
We make a good team.
Then let's go.
We are going to walk the perimeter. In the meantime, none of you are to leave the premises.

Later

Choose an empty room, find a pen, and fill out this document.
Then wait. I'll be around to collect them and we'll get to you when we get to you.
The inspector will be around to interview you all individually.
Ugh.
Creep.
Pff.
Merde.
Well, hell.
<snicker>
Oh. And a small tip.
When the chief inspector puts on a diamond tie tack, he knows the murderer, and when he sports the pigeon blood ruby one...
...he has the goods and someone is headed to the guillotine.

None

Did you notice anyone leaving the site?

non

Did yo... at this site?

I don't think so...

Would ... ody search, DNA sample, lie detector test, or fingerprinting and other forensi

perhaps.

... be helpful in this investigation?

not that I recall.

Did you ... hat would be helpful in this investigation?

Do you

but the gallery families seem fracti

each

Tell me about yourself.

When I am in Paris, I am at my happies

until now, and this mess.

What do you want to know? — just as

Bonjour!

FORM PPD-001

PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEW

- While you wait for your interview, you will be separated from other detainees and may not communicate with them or anyone else, other than an officer of the law.
- You must turn over a valid ID such as a driver's license or passport.
- You will be photographed by an officer.
- You may not leave the premises until released by the chief investigative officer.
- Do not smoke, chew ... or use your telephone or any other technical device.
- Do not use the bathroo... drink without permission from an officer.
- Do not touch anything ... adjust the thermostat, open or close any windows or doors.
- Do not litter or spit within ... s site.

Complete the following for

Date of birth: 03/0

Name: Pearson ... th J.
(Last) (Middle)

Legal Address: P. ... 411, St. Louis, M... 63108

Phone Number(s) Reach me at Hotel d'Arge... (Pa...
(5-star in my b...

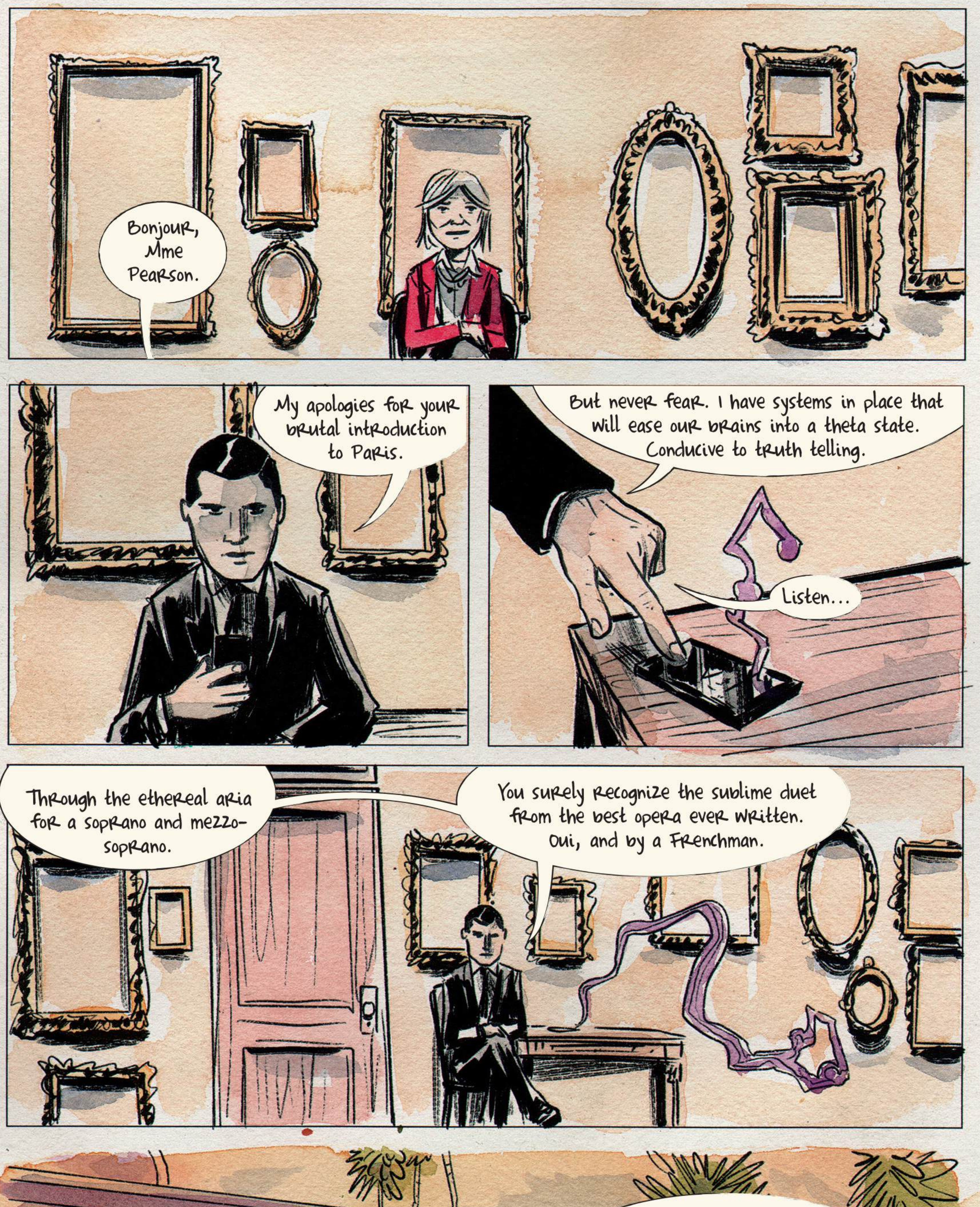
Gender: female

Race: Caucasian

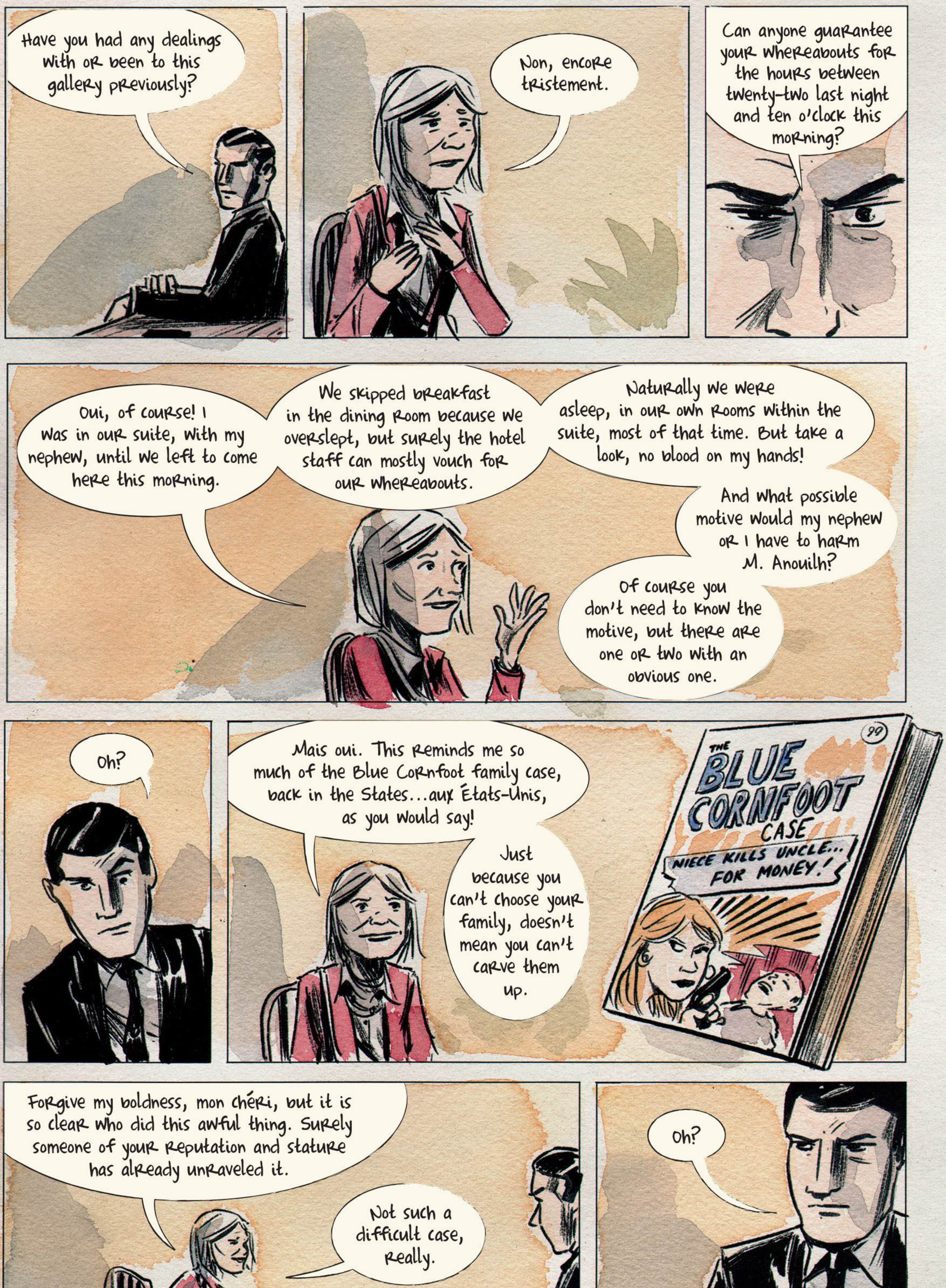
Ethnicity: English, Scottish, wish French!

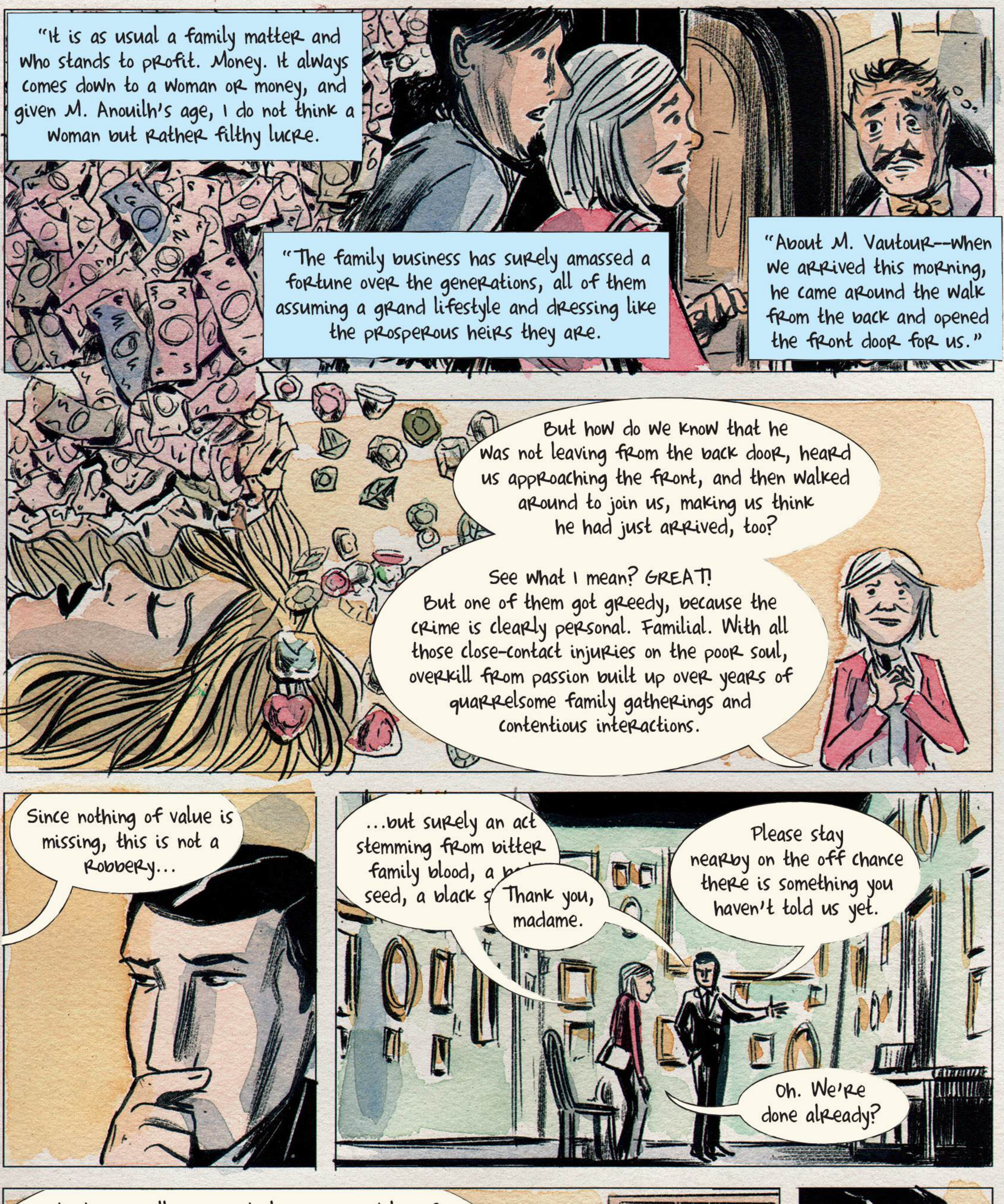
Marital status: widow

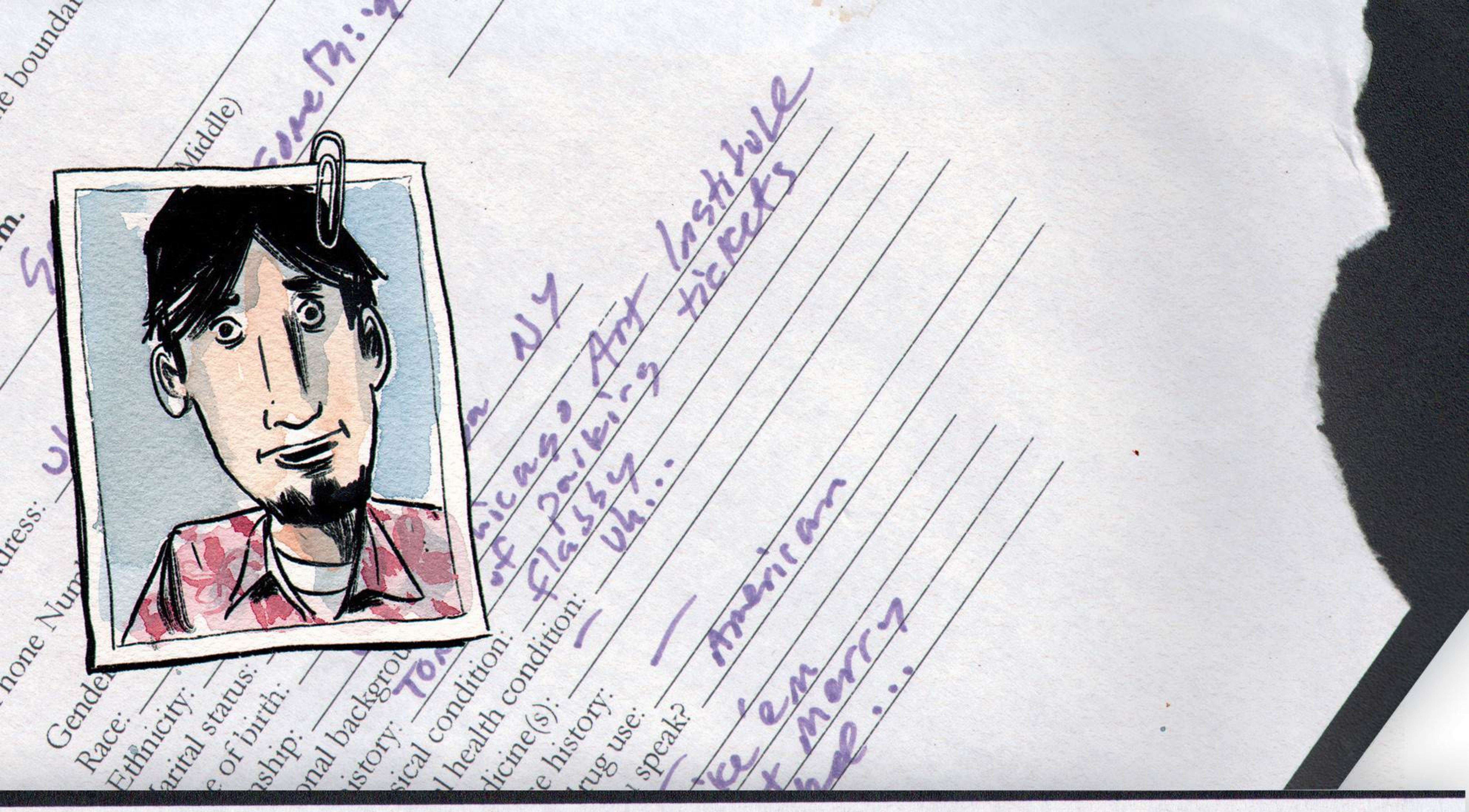
Chicago, Illinois USA ... Etats-Unis!


Bonjour, Mme Pearson.
My apologies for your brutal introduction to Paris.
But never fear. I have systems in place that will ease our brains into a theta state. Conducive to truth telling.
Listen...
Through the ethereal aria for a soprano and mezzo-soprano.
You surely recognize the sublime duet from the best opera ever written. Oui, and by a Frenchman.
The opera "Lakmé."
The story of two friends enjoying an afternoon bathing in a river with jasmine in the air.

You mean the tale of stolen jewels where everyone dies in the end.
Not all that relaxing if you ask me.
Hm. Well, yes. So tell me...
What brings you to our magnificent city?
I come to Paris, the City of Lights, the City of Love, at every opportunity. At the drop of a hat--or should I say beret heh-heh--I find myself here.
Oh, of course!
Why this time, madame, and for how long?
"Stay on topic, Merry," I say to myself. Well, I thought a week of avril en Paree a bonne idea and I have had no luck, or should I say "non bonne chance."
In the States finding the beautiful antique gilt frame I need. No one carves like the French, I say. So voilà, here I am!
And the young man...?
My great-nephew. We're traveling together. It takes the place of the Grand Tour, which neither of us ever got--désolé--we get along so well. He is like a son to me.
He is great with directions, you know, nord, sud, et cetera, and seeing that my treasures get shipped home...
No antiques that you should care about. Just things you have plenty of here.
Spreading love of things French to the New World, so to speak. D'accord?
What brought you to the gallery this morning?
Frames, of course!
They have the best and broadest selection!
Tristement, it was not meant to be this time.


Have you had any dealings with or been to this gallery previously?
Non, encore tristement.
Can anyone guarantee your whereabouts for the hours between twenty-two last night and ten o'clock this morning?
Oui, of course! I was in our suite, with my nephew, until we left to come here this morning.
We skipped breakfast in the dining room because we overslept, but surely the hotel staff can mostly vouch for our whereabouts.
Naturally we were asleep, in our own rooms within the suite, most of that time. But take a look, no blood on my hands!
And what possible motive would my nephew or I have to harm M. Anouilh?
Of course you don't need to know the motive, but there are one or two with an obvious one.
Oh?
Mais oui. This reminds me so much of the Blue Cornfoot family case, back in the States…aux États-Unis, as you would say!
Just because you can't choose your family, doesn't mean you can't carve them up.
99
THE BLUE CORNFOOT CASE
NIECE KILLS UNCLE… FOR MONEY!
Forgive my boldness, mon chéri, but it is so clear who did this awful thing. Surely someone of your reputation and stature has already unraveled it.
Not such a difficult case, really.
Oh?


"It is as usual a family matter and who stands to profit. Money. It always comes down to a woman or money, and given M. Anouilh's age, I do not think a woman but rather filthy lucre.
"The family business has surely amassed a fortune over the generations, all of them assuming a grand lifestyle and dressing like the prosperous heirs they are.
"About M. Vautour--when we arrived this morning, he came around the walk from the back and opened the front door for us."
But how do we know that he was not leaving from the back door, heard us approaching the front, and then walked around to join us, making us think he had just arrived, too?
See what I mean? GREAT! But one of them got greedy, because the crime is clearly personal. Familial. With all those close-contact injuries on the poor soul, overkill from passion built up over years of quarrelsome family gatherings and contentious interactions.
Since nothing of value is missing, this is not a robbery...
...but surely an act stemming from bitter family blood, a b seed, a black s
Thank you, madame.
Please stay nearby on the off chance there is something you haven't told us yet.
Oh. We're done already?
In that case, I'll go back to les puces and look for some Roemer wineglasses. The amber ones with prunts, they must have those cute little prunts... and maybe find a new favorite wine.
Whispering Angel was my go-to but ruined for me now that the millennials have taken it over and it has lost its panache, as you say.
Then Printemps for an au courant printemps outfit, heh-heh oh-la-la!
Adieu, madame.



e boundar

m.

(Middle) Some Thi

dress:

hone Numb

Gende

Race:

Ethnicity:

arital status:

e of birth: NY

nship:

onal backgrou Chicago Art Institute

istory: Tons of parking tickets

sical condition: flashy

l health condition: uh...

dicine(s): —

e history: —

rug use: American

speak?

are not a resident of Paris, where are you staying and where can you be reached? hotel w/ my aunt

re you in Paris? shopping

u traveling with anyone? Aunt

u have friends or relatives in Paris? in France? not really

you ever been arrested? uh... not justly.

time did you arrive at this site and why were you here? this morning — to chat about some chairs

you arrived at this site, did you leave at any time? no — I wish

is your relationship to the victim? no idea who he is

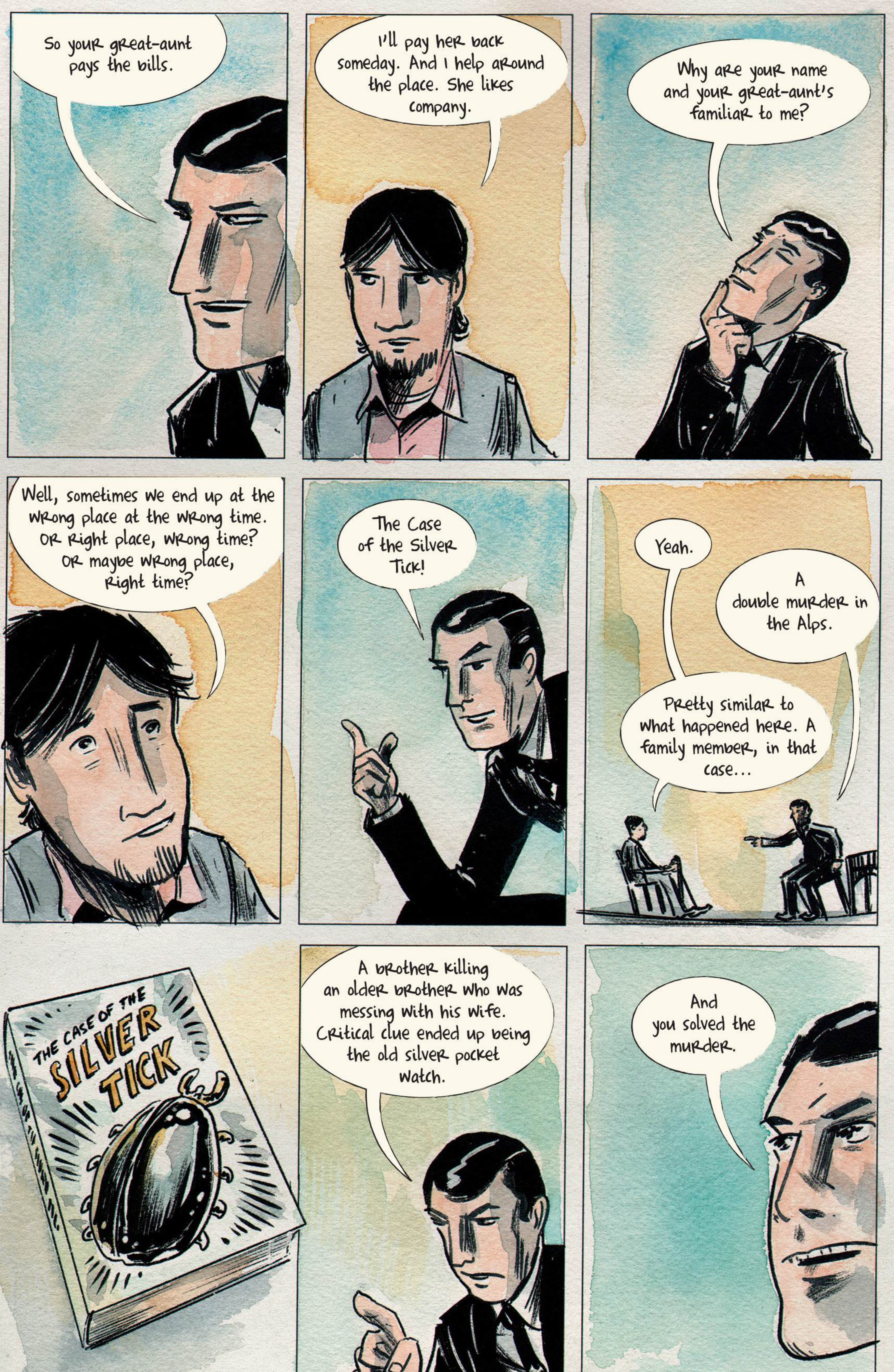
ou notice anyone leaving the site? no

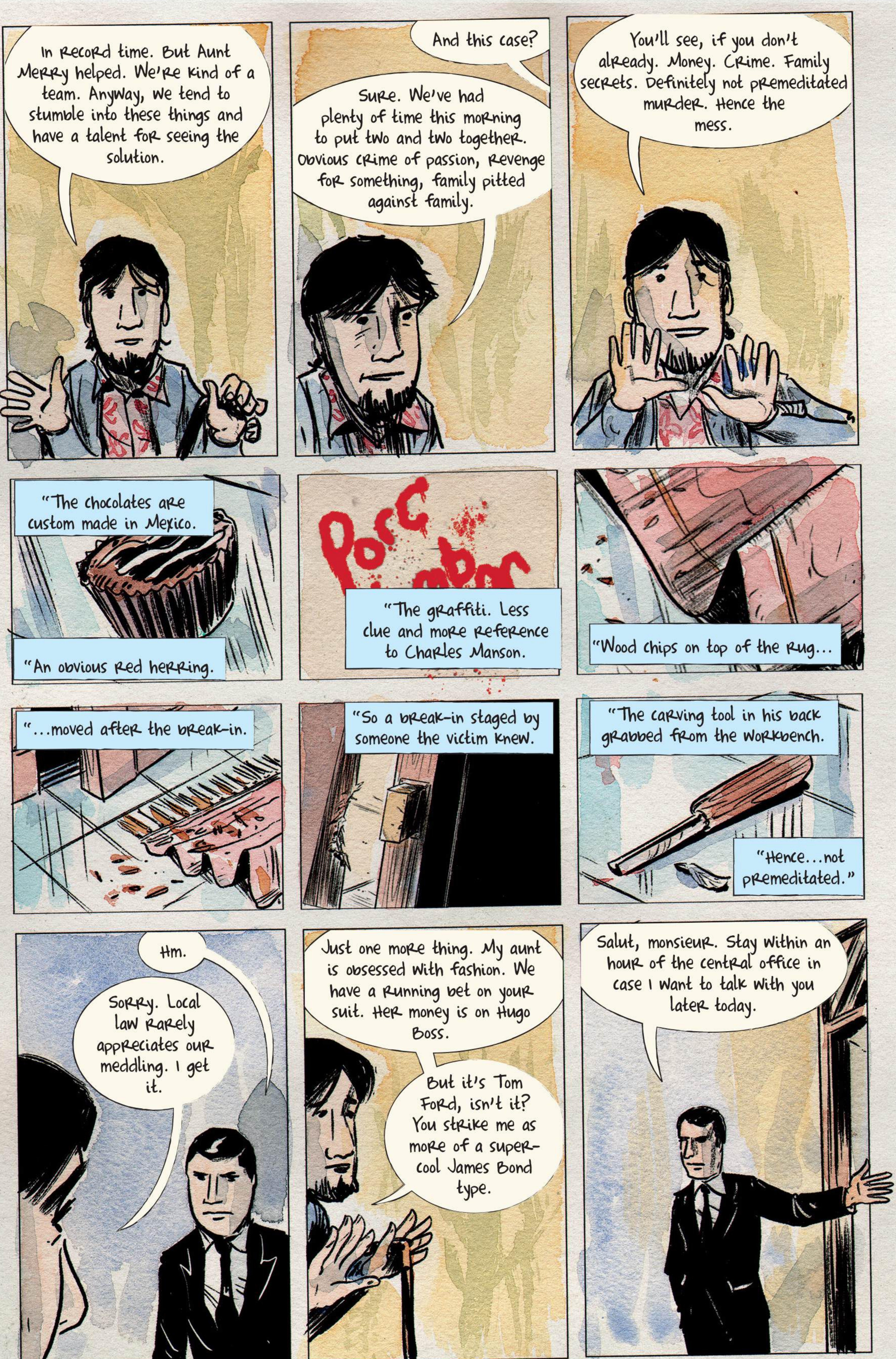
ou touch or disturb anything at this site? I wrecked the bathroom — sorry

d you voluntarily submit to a body search, DNA sample, lie detector test, or fingerprinting and other ic tests? sure

ou witness anything that would be helpful in this investigation? no

M. Pearson, what has brought you to France and how long do you plan on staying?
TAP
LAKMÉ
J'voud drais. Un s'il vou play.
Please, please--English is preferable.
...christ.
Well, it wasn't my idea to be here. Aunt Merry was obsessed with these chairs. I just got back from a disastrously long trip to Hawaii...trying to catch up with my parents.
Mme Pearson is...not your mother.?
I wish. She's my great-aunt. Haven't seen my mom in... Anyway, I was bribed here with some homemade crème brûlée. She wanted to sell her chairs. Convinced they were worth a fortune. Historic Louis the something-some-things...
Antique chairs?
We were on our way here to sell them this morning. The buyer ended up being dead...so guess the deal is off.
But you had never met or talked with the murder victim?
Nah. Only know that he was going to buy Aunt Merry's chairs and then we could go somewhere...somewhere sunnier.
Are you employed, monsieur?
Define "employed." I'm working...on a degree. Probably major in art history or something.
Or cooking. I'm... undecided.


So your great-aunt pays the bills.
I'll pay her back someday. And I help around the place. She likes company.
Why are your name and your great-aunt's familiar to me?
Well, sometimes we end up at the wrong place at the wrong time. Or right place, wrong time? Or maybe wrong place, right time?
The Case of the Silver Tick!
Yeah.
A double murder in the Alps.
Pretty similar to what happened here. A family member, in that case...
THE CASE OF THE SILVER TICK
A brother killing an older brother who was messing with his wife. Critical clue ended up being the old silver pocket watch.
And you solved the murder.


In record time. But Aunt Merry helped. We're kind of a team. Anyway, we tend to stumble into these things and have a talent for seeing the solution.
And this case?
Sure. We've had plenty of time this morning to put two and two together. Obvious crime of passion, revenge for something, family pitted against family.
You'll see, if you don't already. Money. Crime. Family secrets. Definitely not premeditated murder. Hence the mess.
"The chocolates are custom made in Mexico.
"An obvious red herring.
Porc
"The graffiti. Less clue and more reference to Charles Manson.
"Wood chips on top of the rug…
"…moved after the break-in.
"So a break-in staged by someone the victim knew.
"The carving tool in his back grabbed from the workbench.
"Hence…not premeditated."
Hm.
Sorry. Local law rarely appreciates our meddling. I get it.
Just one more thing. My aunt is obsessed with fashion. We have a running bet on your suit. Her money is on Hugo Boss.
But it's Tom Ford, isn't it? You strike me as more of a super-cool James Bond type.
Salut, monsieur. Stay within an hour of the central office in case I want to talk with you later today.

RELIMINA

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co
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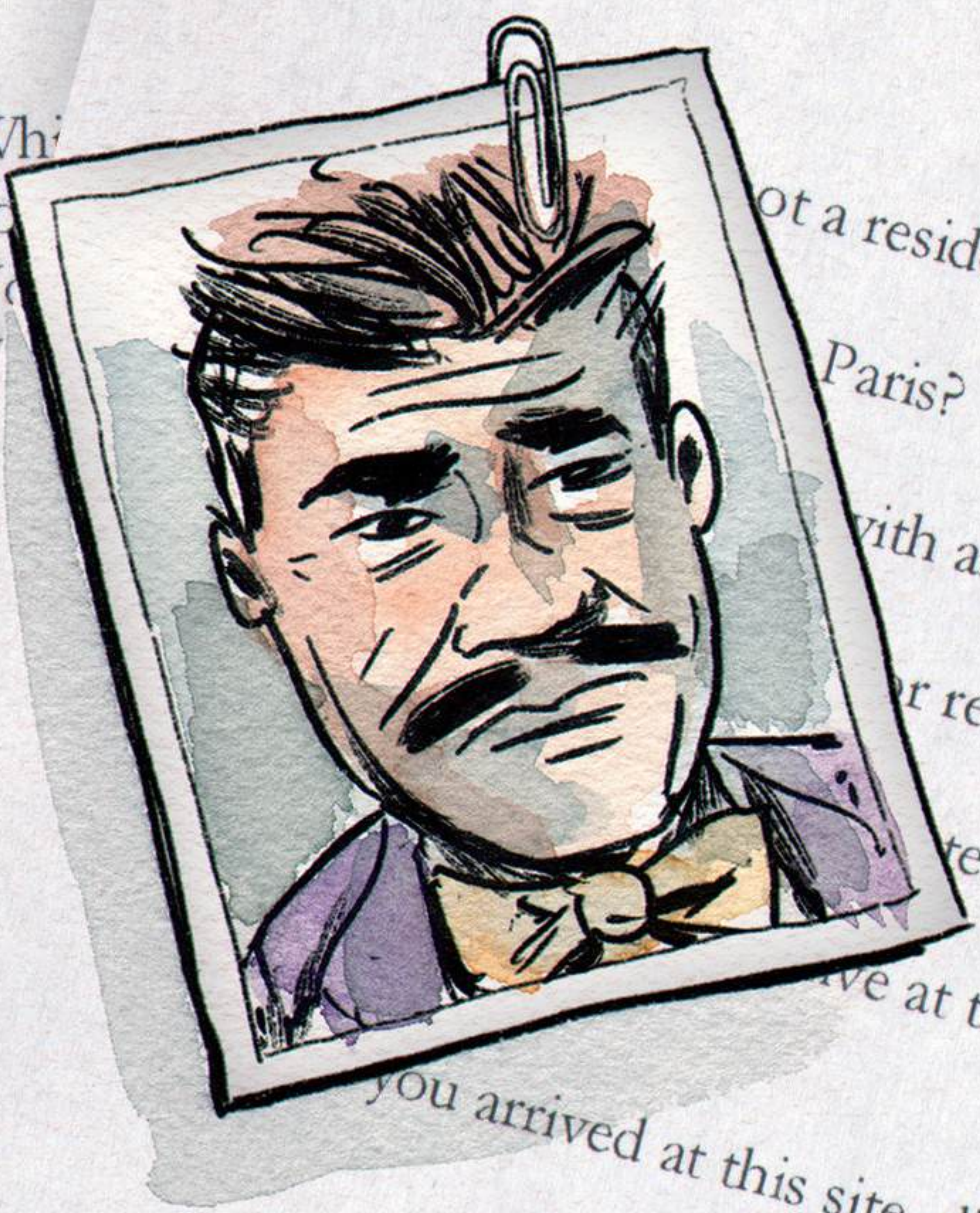
-

FORM PPD-001



ot a resident of Paris, where are you staying and where can you be reached?

Paris?

I've been

with anyone?

asking myself this

question for years

r relatives in Paris? in France?

ted?

arrested but never conv

ve at this site and why were you here?

this morning just before

you arrived at this site, did you leave at any time?

non

What is your relationship to the victim?

Did you notice anyone leaving the site?

cousin part of

family

no

Did you touch or disturb anything at this site?

no

Would you voluntarily submit to a body search, DNA sample, lie detector test, or fingerprinting and other forensic tests?

no

Did you witness anything that would be helpful in this investigation?

no

Do you have any specific knowledge that would be helpful in this investigation?

no

Tell me about yourself.

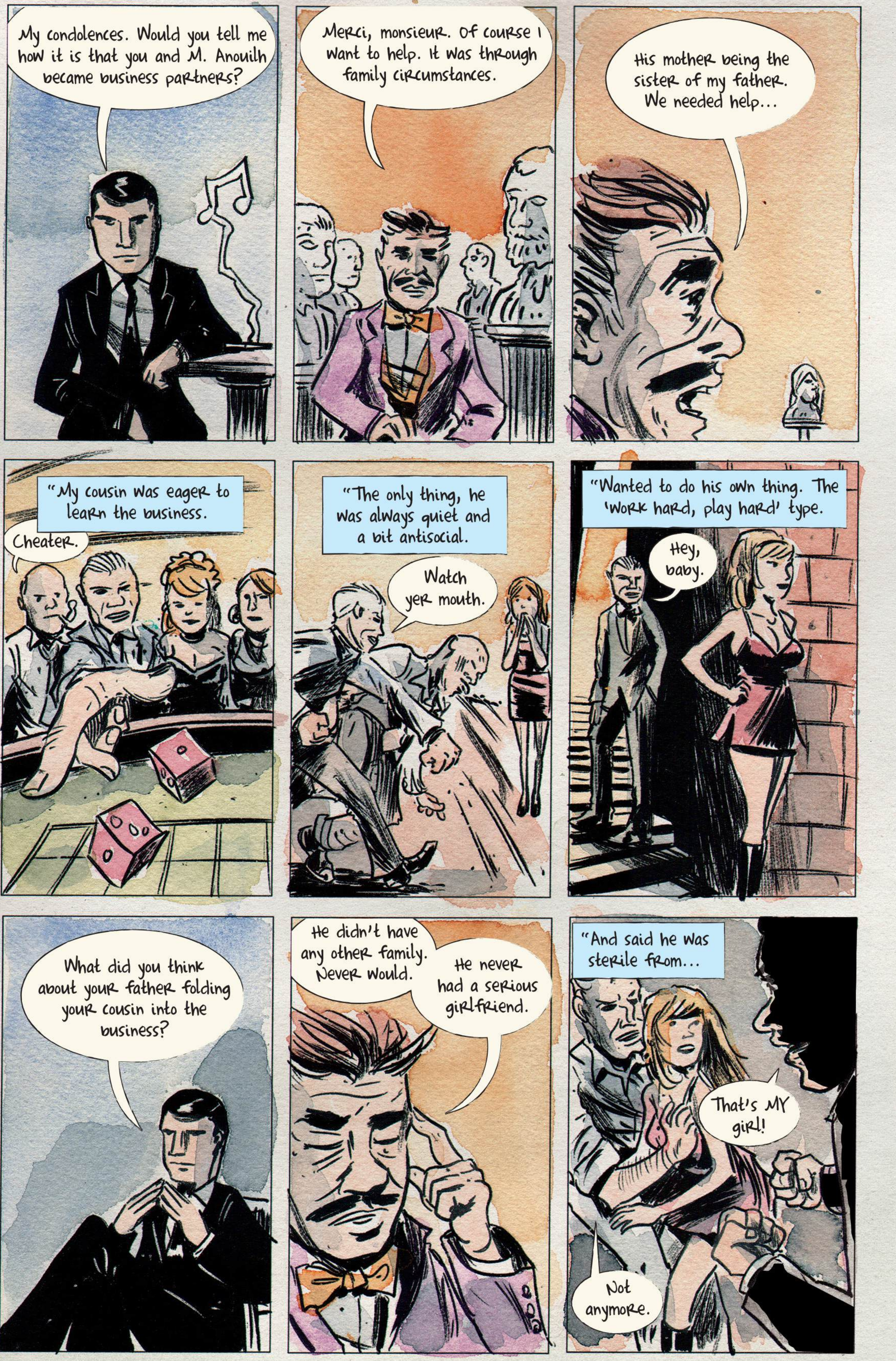
I am heart-broken at

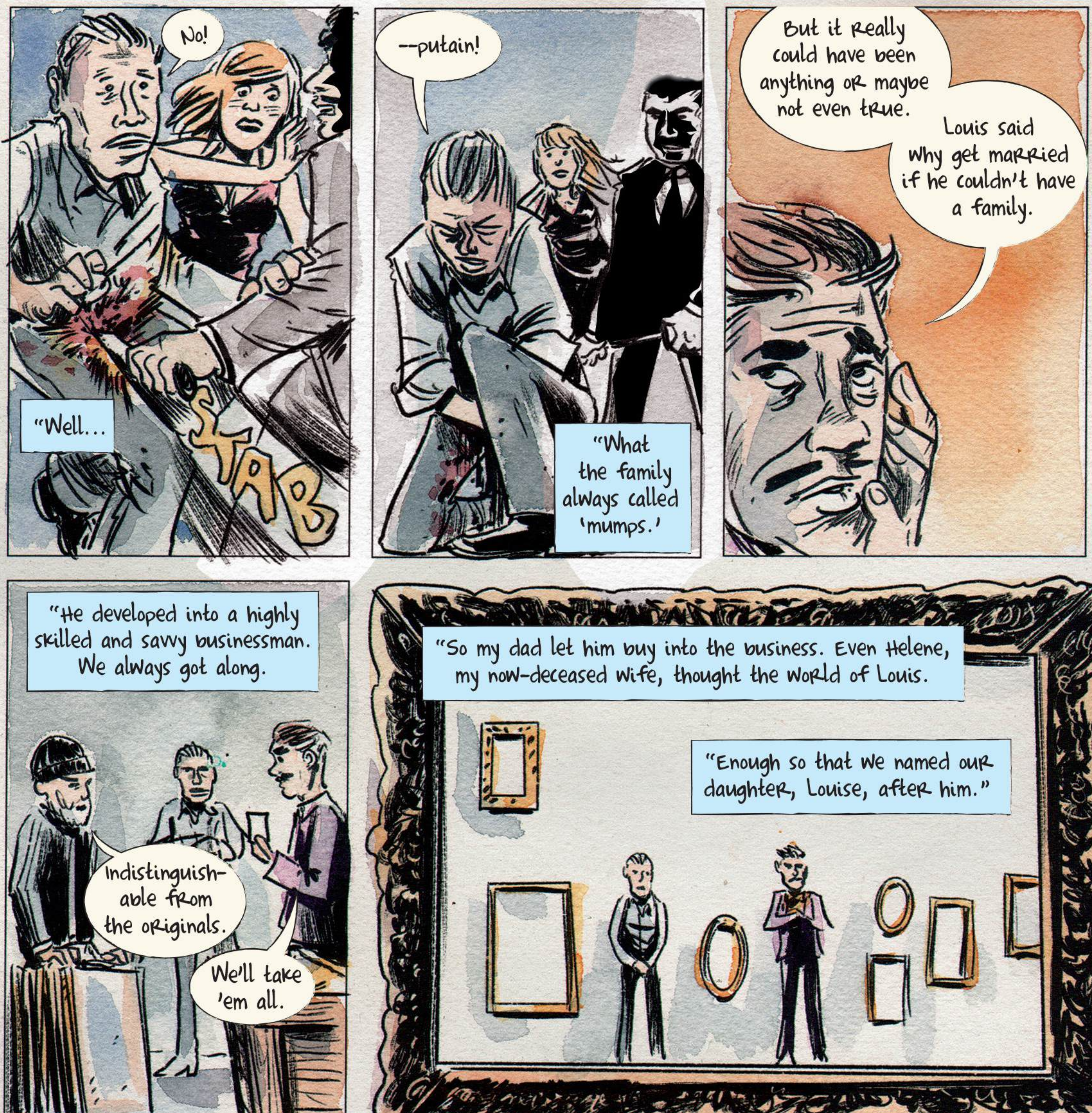
the loss of life. I truly

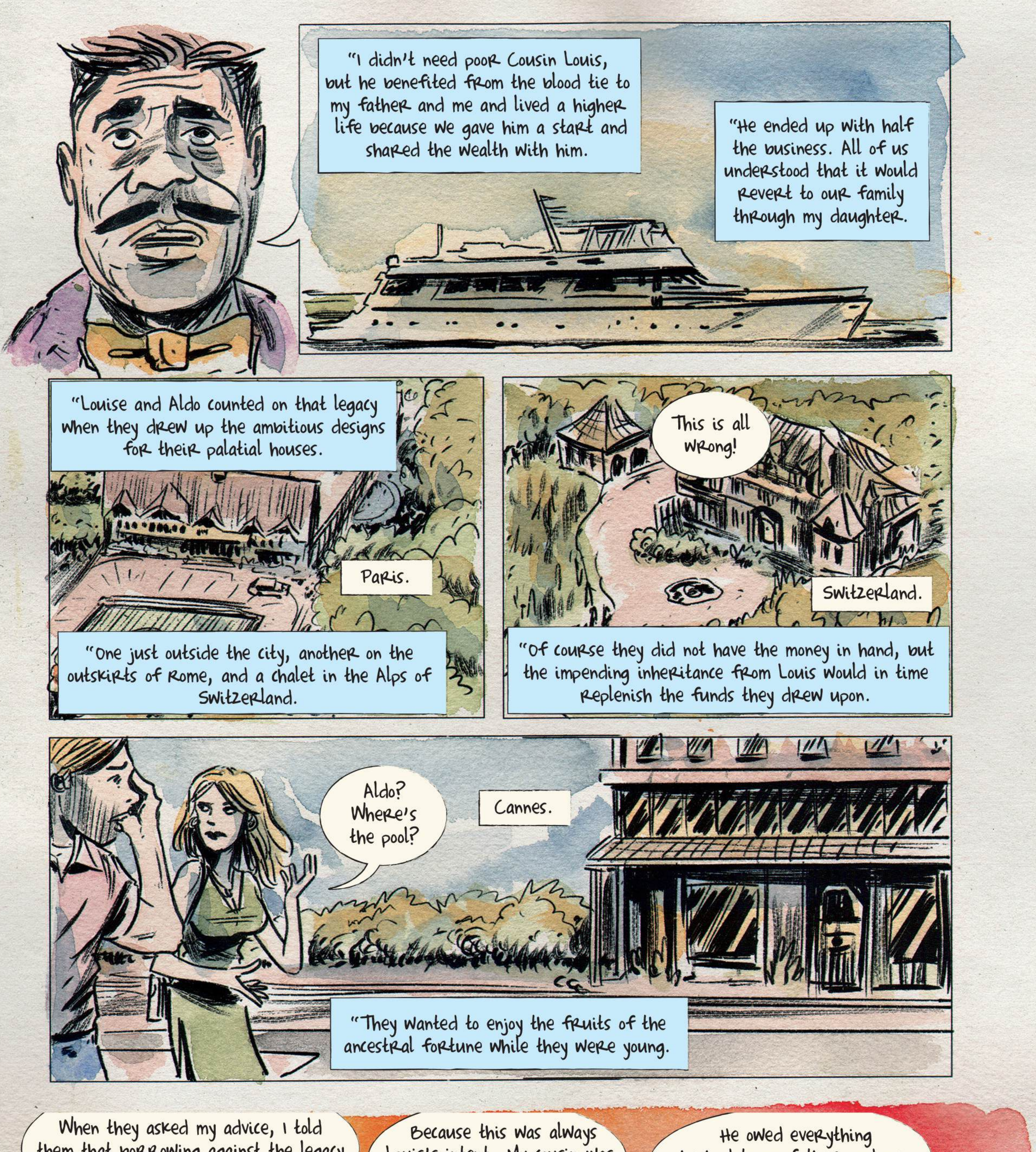
hope you find the culprit.

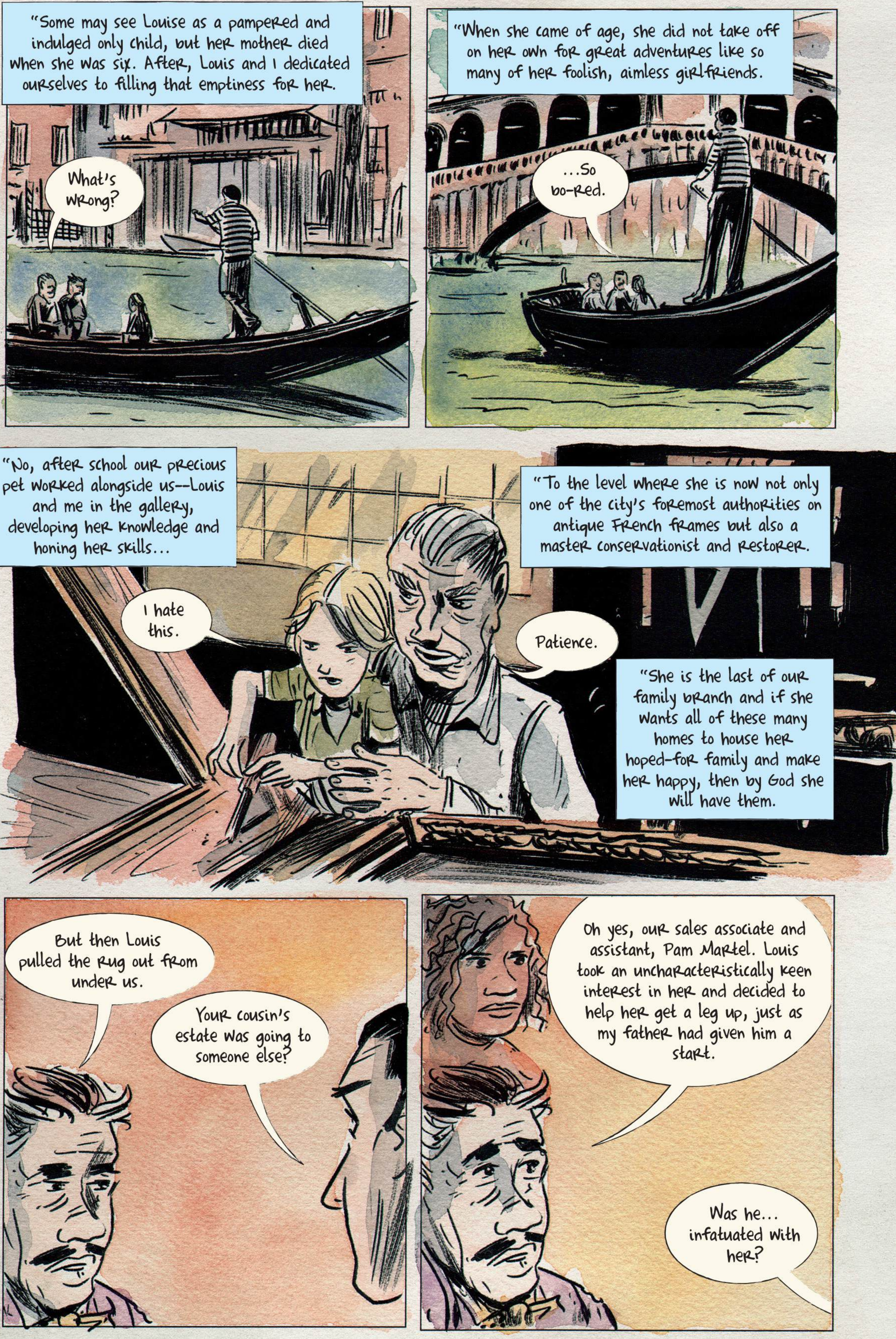
His death benefits no one that

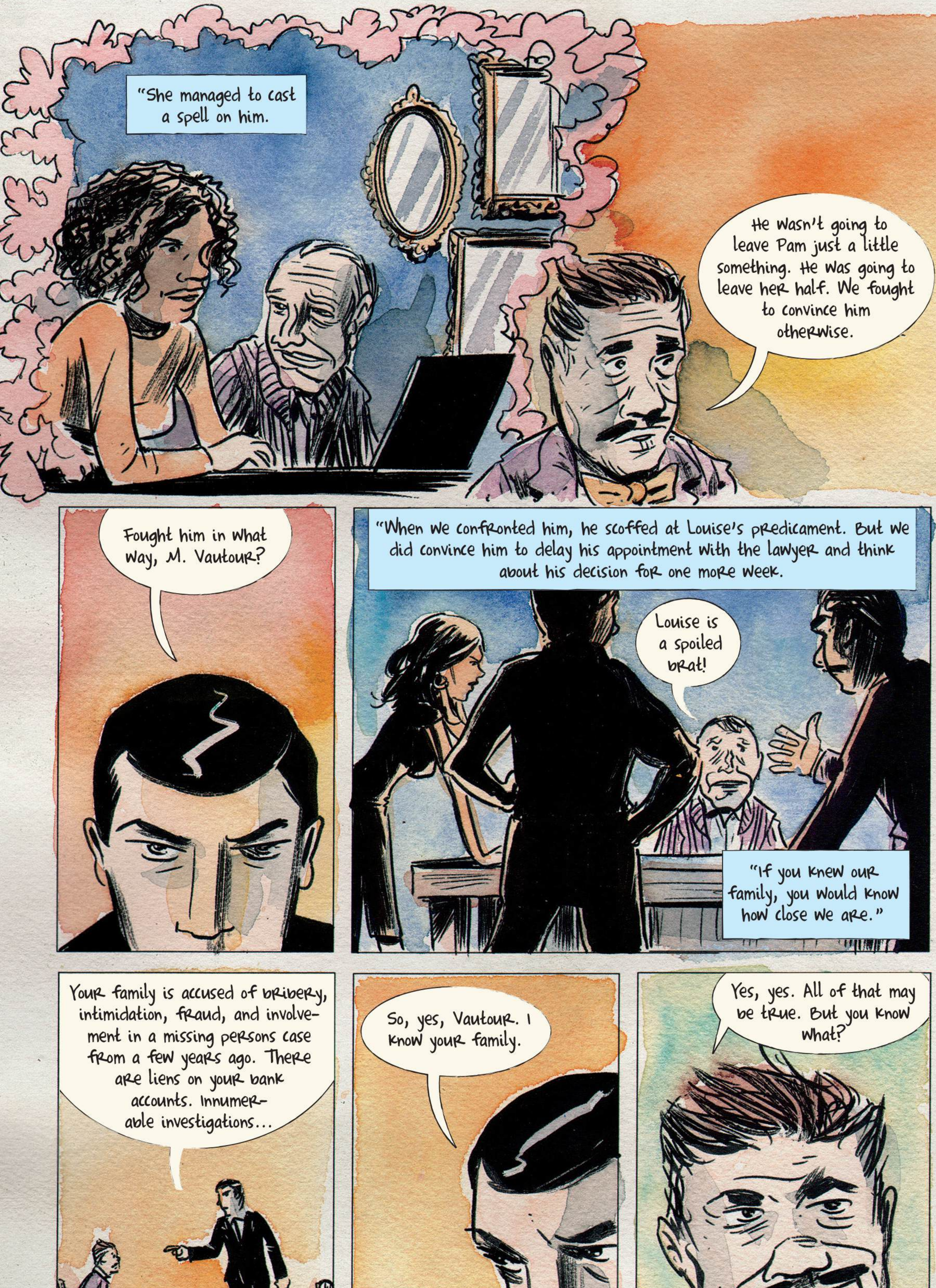
I know.


My condolences. Would you tell me how it is that you and M. Anouilh became business partners?
Merci, monsieur. Of course I want to help. It was through family circumstances.
His mother being the sister of my father. We needed help...
"My cousin was eager to learn the business.
Cheater.
"The only thing, he was always quiet and a bit antisocial.
Watch yer mouth.
"Wanted to do his own thing. The 'work hard, play hard' type.
Hey, baby.
What did you think about your father folding your cousin into the business?
He didn't have any other family. Never would.
He never had a serious girlfriend.
"And said he was sterile from...
That's MY girl!
Not anymore.


No!
"Well...
STAB
--putain!
"What the family always called 'mumps.'
But it really could have been anything or maybe not even true.
Louis said why get married if he couldn't have a family.
"He developed into a highly skilled and savvy businessman. We always got along.
Indistinguishable from the originals.
We'll take 'em all.
"So my dad let him buy into the business. Even Helene, my now-deceased wife, thought the world of Louis.
"Enough so that we named our daughter, Louise, after him."
M. Anouilh's diary shows that he has an appointment scheduled for tomorrow with his estate attorney.
Leads me to believe it was his intent to change his will. Were you aware that he was intending to change his will?
Yes. We all knew.


"I didn't need poor Cousin Louis, but he benefited from the blood tie to my father and me and lived a higher life because we gave him a start and shared the wealth with him.
"He ended up with half the business. All of us understood that it would revert to our family through my daughter.
"Louise and Aldo counted on that legacy when they drew up the ambitious designs for their palatial houses.
Paris.
"One just outside the city, another on the outskirts of Rome, and a chalet in the Alps of Switzerland.
This is all wrong!
Switzerland.
"Of course they did not have the money in hand, but the impending inheritance from Louis would in time replenish the funds they drew upon.
Aldo? Where's the pool?
Cannes.
"They wanted to enjoy the fruits of the ancestral fortune while they were young.
When they asked my advice, I told them that borrowing against the legacy was zero risk since the will was as good as ironclad.
Because this was always Louis's intent. My cousin was a seventy-year-old confirmed bachelor...
He owed everything he had to my father and me. He loved Louise like a daughter.
dab
ooo


"Some may see Louise as a pampered and indulged only child, but her mother died when she was six. After, Louis and I dedicated ourselves to filling that emptiness for her.
What's wrong?
"When she came of age, she did not take off on her own for great adventures like so many of her foolish, aimless girlfriends.
...So bo-red.
"No, after school our precious pet worked alongside us--Louis and me in the gallery, developing her knowledge and honing her skills...
I hate this.
"To the level where she is now not only one of the city's foremost authorities on antique French frames but also a master conservationist and restorer.
Patience.
"She is the last of our family branch and if she wants all of these many homes to house her hoped-for family and make her happy, then by God she will have them.
But then Louis pulled the rug out from under us.
Your cousin's estate was going to someone else?
Oh yes, our sales associate and assistant, Pam Martel. Louis took an uncharacteristically keen interest in her and decided to help her get a leg up, just as my father had given him a start.
Was he... infatuated with her?


"She managed to cast a spell on him.
He wasn't going to leave Pam just a little something. He was going to leave her half. We fought to convince him otherwise.
Fought him in what way, M. Vautour?
"When we confronted him, he scoffed at Louise's predicament. But we did convince him to delay his appointment with the lawyer and think about his decision for one more week.
Louise is a spoiled brat!
"If you knew our family, you would know how close we are."
Your family is accused of bribery, intimidation, fraud, and involvement in a missing persons case from a few years ago. There are liens on your bank accounts. Innumerable investigations...
So, yes, Vautour. I know your family.
Yes, yes. All of that may be true. But you know what?

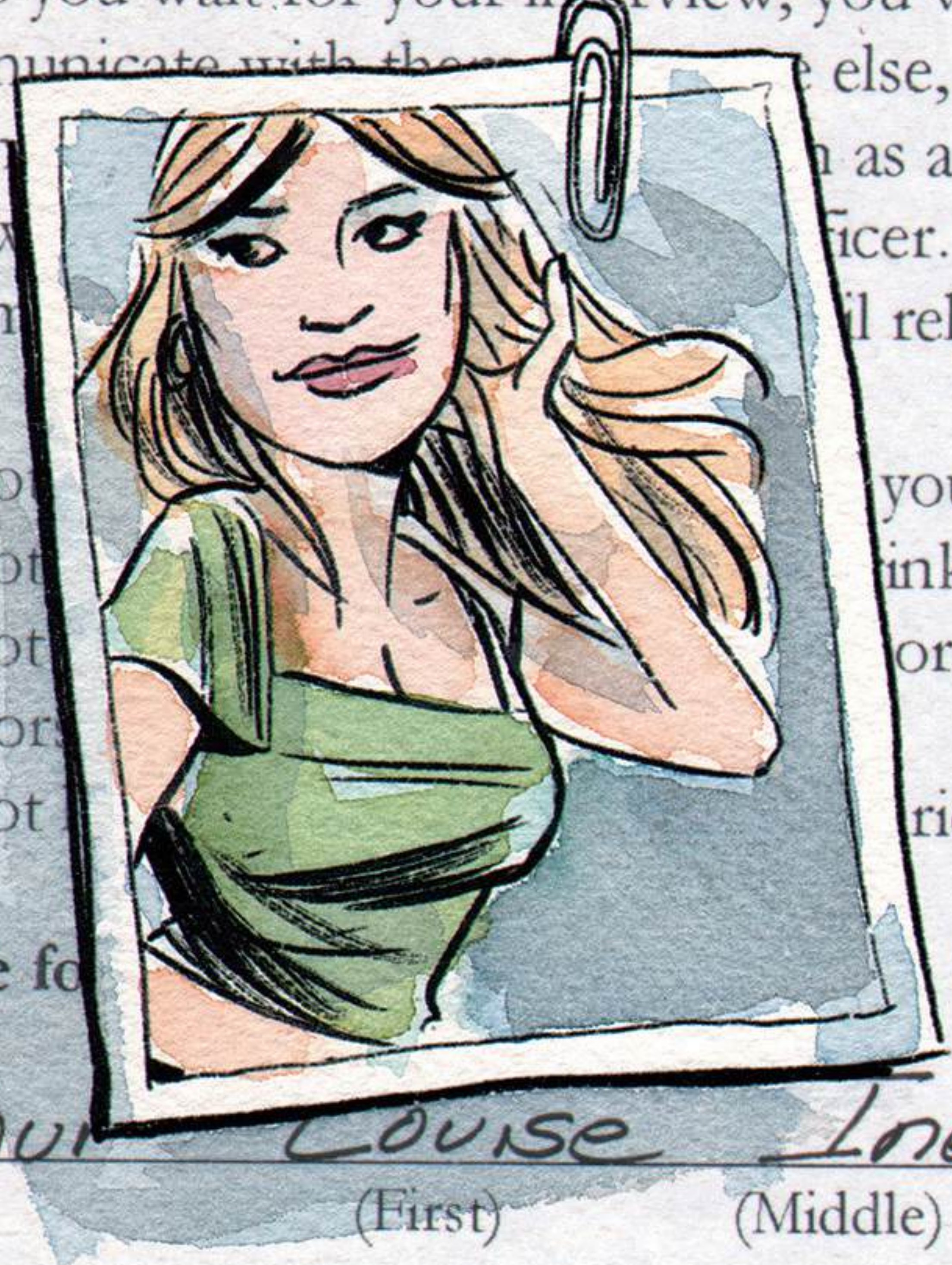
Not one conviction.
SHHHHHH
Don't forget "C" doesn't mean cold. It means "chaud." Hot.
Careful or you'll burn the sweet little one's tongue.
FSHHHH
Got it.
Here ya go.
That's it.

PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEW

FORM PPD-001

- While you wait for your interview, you will be separated from other detainees and may not communicate with the … else, other than an officer of the law.
- You n… as a driver's license or passport.
- You w… ficer.
- You m… il released by the chief investigative officer.

- Do no… your telephone or any other technical device.
- Do no… ink without permission from an officer.
- Do not … or adjust the thermostat, open or close any windows, shades, or door…
- Do not … ries of this site.



Complete the fo…

Name: Vatour Louise Inés (Last) (First) (Middle)

Date of birth: 22 09 1992

Legal Address: c/o la galerie

Phone Number(s) c/o la galerie

Gender: femelle

Race: Caucasian

Ethnicity: français

Marital status: célibataire

Place of birth: Paris

Citizenship: français

Educational background: Lycée Louis-le-Grand

Criminal history: - Who wants to know?

Current physical condition: bonne santé

Current mental health condition: bonne santé

Prescription Medicine(s): maybe

Alcohol or drug use history:

Current alcohol or drug use: You tell me, hot shot.

What languages do you speak? français, anglais, et italien

Religious affiliation: catholique

Children: guess

Closest relatives: M Régis Vatour

Profession: Artisan

Do you have th…

Have you ever been arrested?

What time did you arrive at this site and why w…

After you arrived at this site, did you leave at any time?

What is your relationship to the victim?

Did you notice anyone leaving the site?

Did you touch or disturb anything at this site?

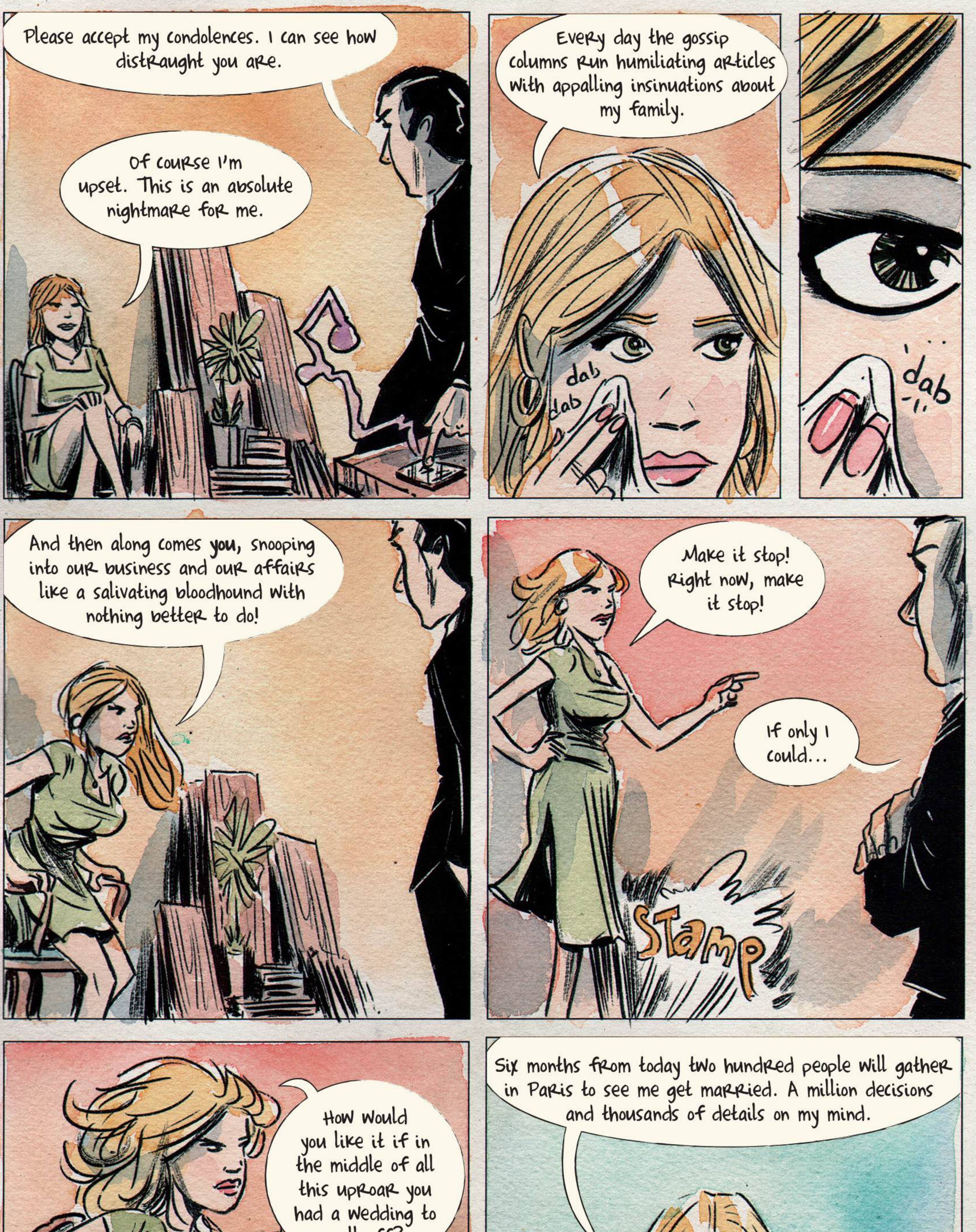
Would you voluntarily submit to a body s… forensic tests?

Did you witness anything that would h…

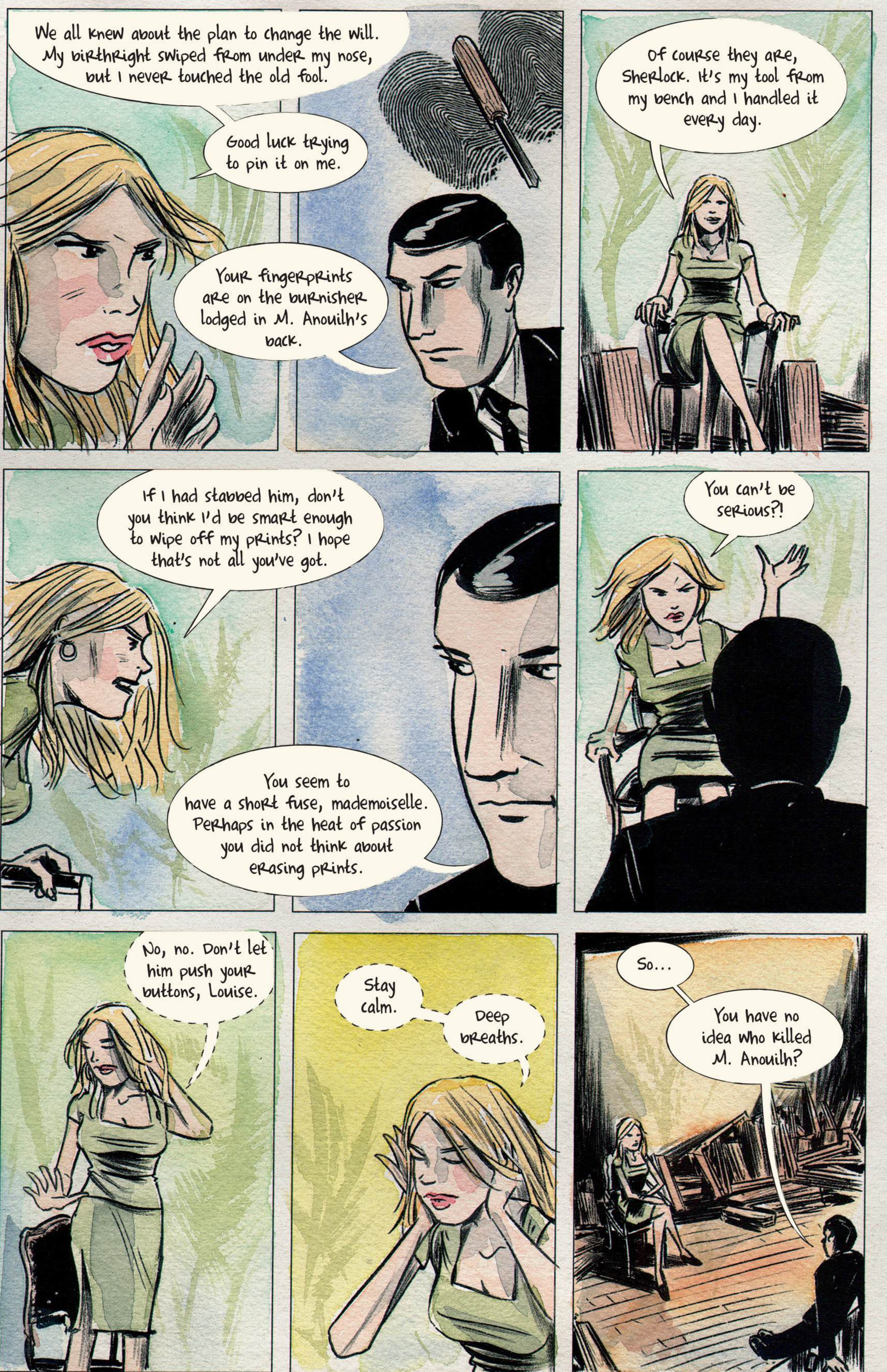
Do you have any specific knowled…

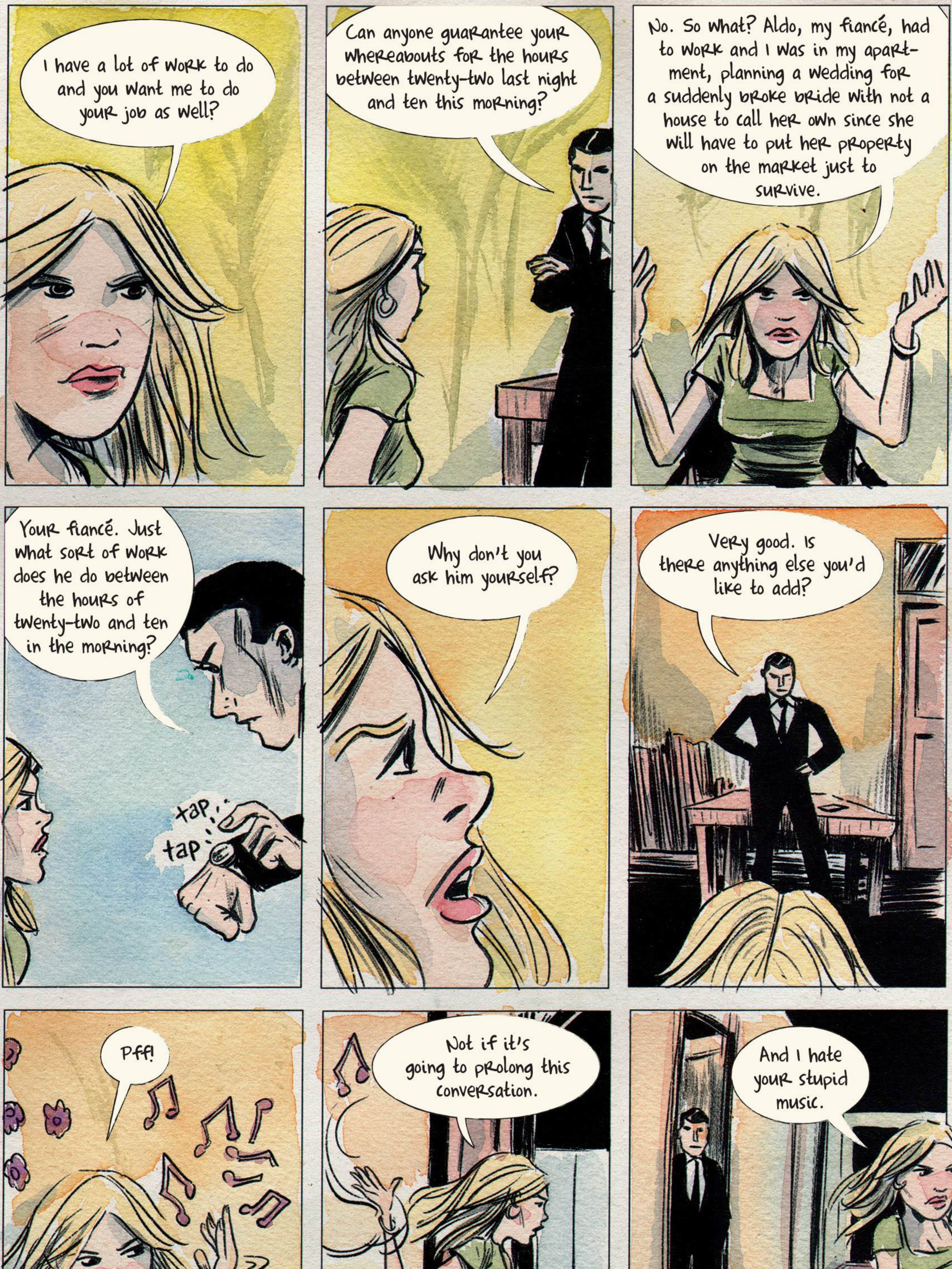
Tell me about yourself.

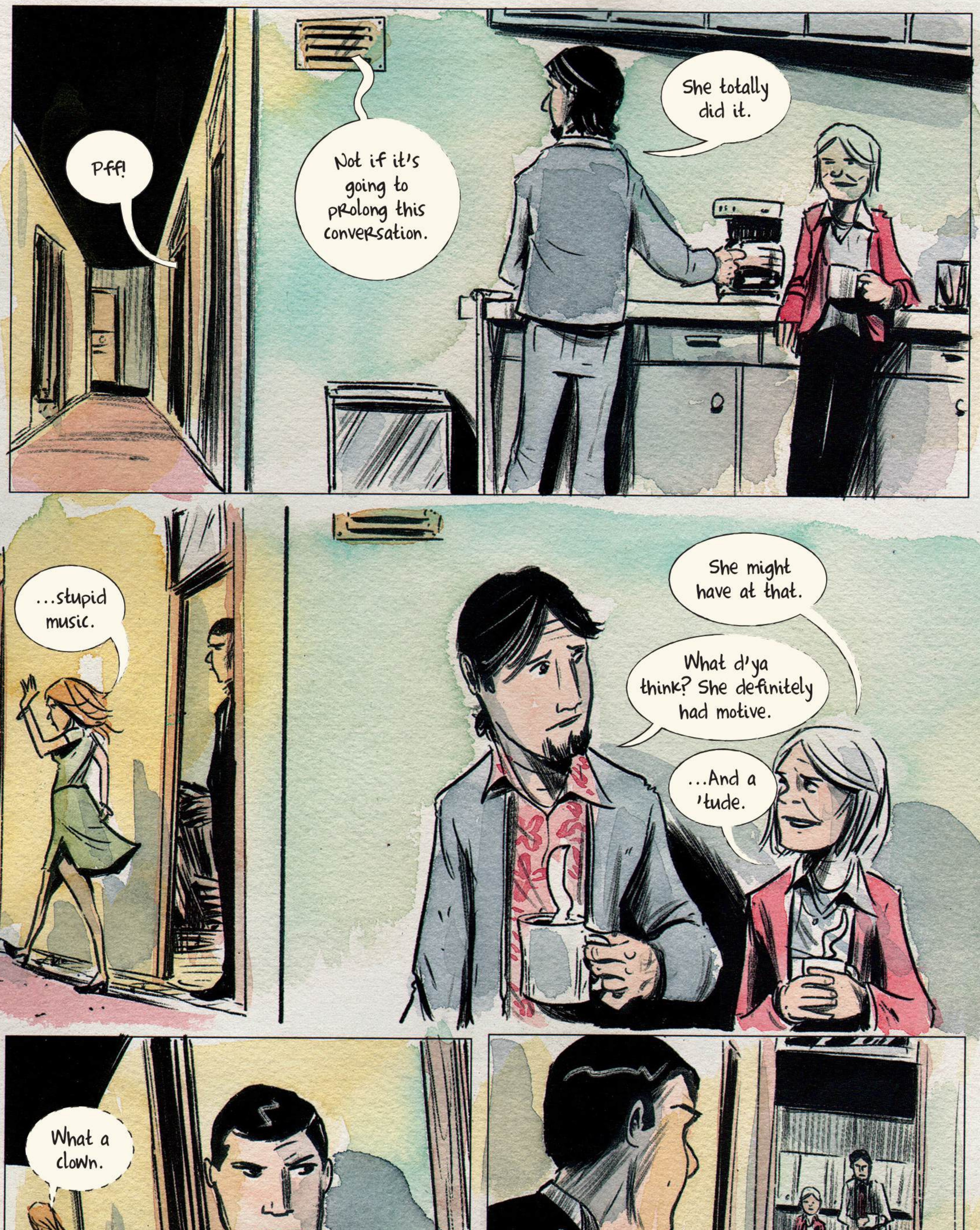
blah blah bl


Please accept my condolences. I can see how distraught you are.
Of course I'm upset. This is an absolute nightmare for me.
Every day the gossip columns run humiliating articles with appalling insinuations about my family.
dab
dab
dab
And then along comes you, snooping into our business and our affairs like a salivating bloodhound with nothing better to do!
Make it stop! Right now, make it stop!
If only I could...
STAMP
How would you like it if in the middle of all this uproar you had a wedding to pull off?
Six months from today two hundred people will gather in Paris to see me get married. A million decisions and thousands of details on my mind.

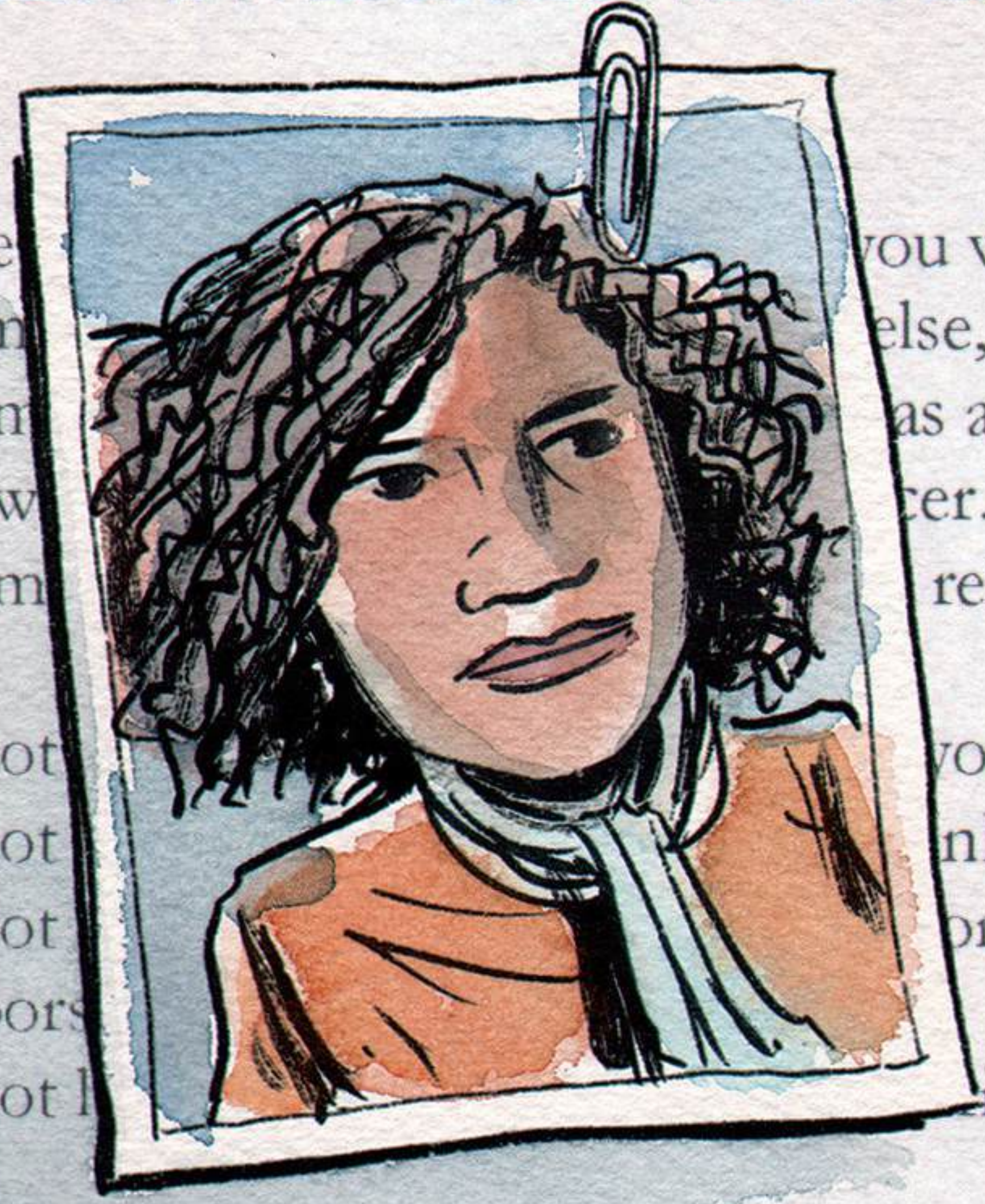
Yet when the phone rings, I can't exactly ignore it, can I? No...it's not about menu tasting or another fitting, but a reporter spewing ugly questions.
I can only take so much and this should be a happy time for me.
We will soon know the murderer and then your nightmare will be over. But to make that happen...
You must tell me if you have any idea who may have committed the heinous act.
It looks so random. Drugged-up randos off the street probably. You'll never find them.
Oh, but I will. So tell me, who stood to gain from M. Anouilh's death?
Specifically. What did you have to gain?
Oh, I knew this was coming!
You uptight stuffed suit.


We all knew about the plan to change the will. My birthright swiped from under my nose, but I never touched the old fool.
Good luck trying to pin it on me.
Your fingerprints are on the burnisher lodged in M. Anouilh's back.
Of course they are, Sherlock. It's my tool from my bench and I handled it every day.
If I had stabbed him, don't you think I'd be smart enough to wipe off my prints? I hope that's not all you've got.
You seem to have a short fuse, mademoiselle. Perhaps in the heat of passion you did not think about erasing prints.
You can't be serious?!
No, no. Don't let him push your buttons, Louise.
Stay calm.
Deep breaths.
So...
You have no idea who killed M. Anouilh?


I have a lot of work to do and you want me to do your job as well?
Can anyone guarantee your whereabouts for the hours between twenty-two last night and ten this morning?
No. So what? Aldo, my fiancé, had to work and I was in my apartment, planning a wedding for a suddenly broke bride with not a house to call her own since she will have to put her property on the market just to survive.
Your fiancé. Just what sort of work does he do between the hours of twenty-two and ten in the morning?
tap tap
Why don't you ask him yourself?
Very good. Is there anything else you'd like to add?
Pff!
Not if it's going to prolong this conversation.
And I hate your stupid music.


Pff!
Not if it's going to prolong this conversation.
She totally did it.
...stupid music.
She might have at that.
What d'ya think? She definitely had motive.
...And a 'tude.
What a clown.

PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEW **FORM PPD-001**



- ➢ While you will be separated from other detainees and may not comm else, other than an officer of the law.
- ➢ You m as a driver's license or passport.
- ➢ You w cer.
- ➢ You m released by the chief investigative officer.

- ➢ Do not your telephone or any other technical device.
- ➢ Do not nk without permission from an officer.
- ➢ Do not or adjust the thermostat, open or close any windows, shades, or doors
- ➢ Do not l ies of this site.

Complete the following form.

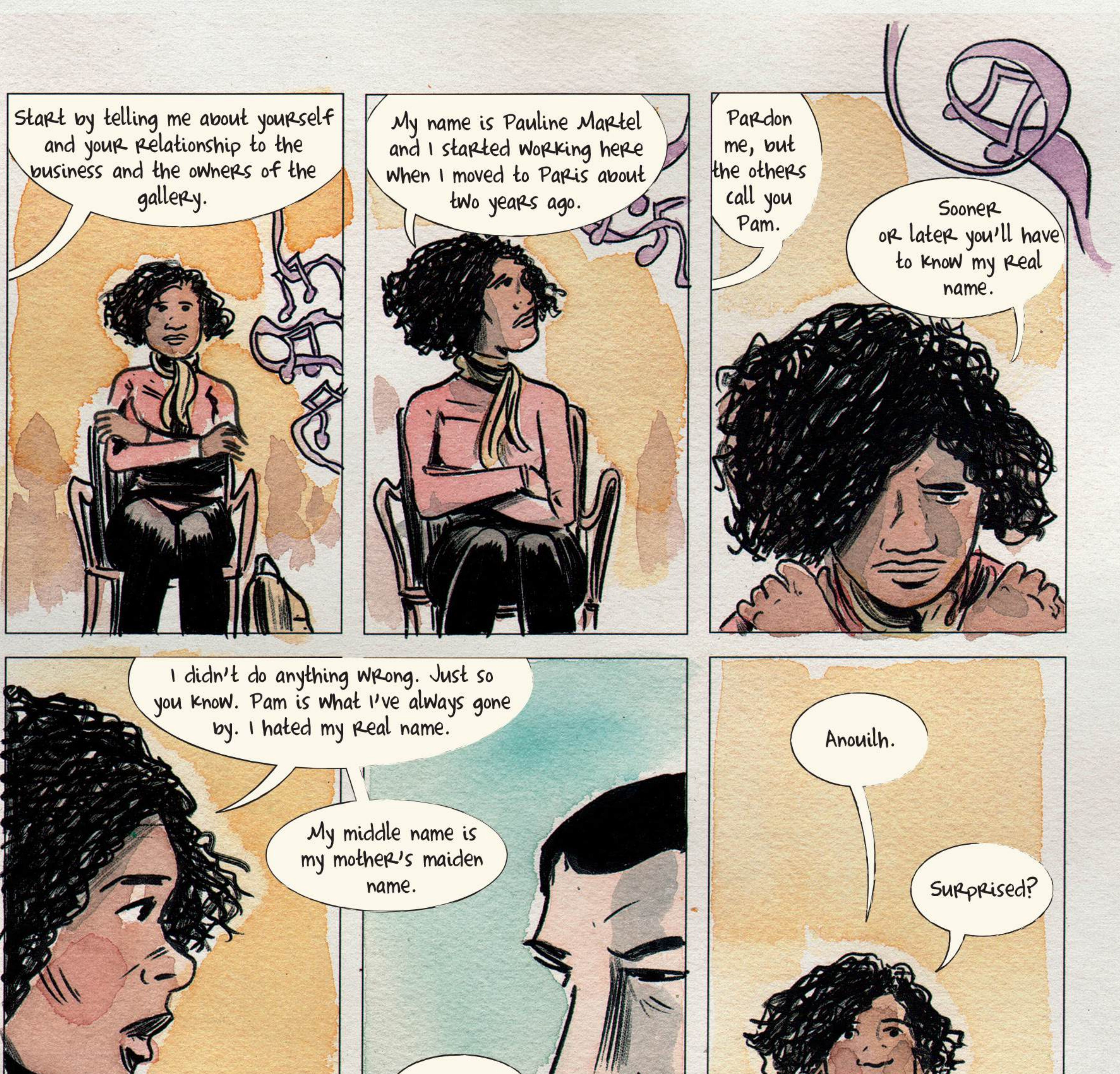
Name: Martel, Pauline "Pam" Date of birth: 28/08/1994
(Last) (First) (Middle)

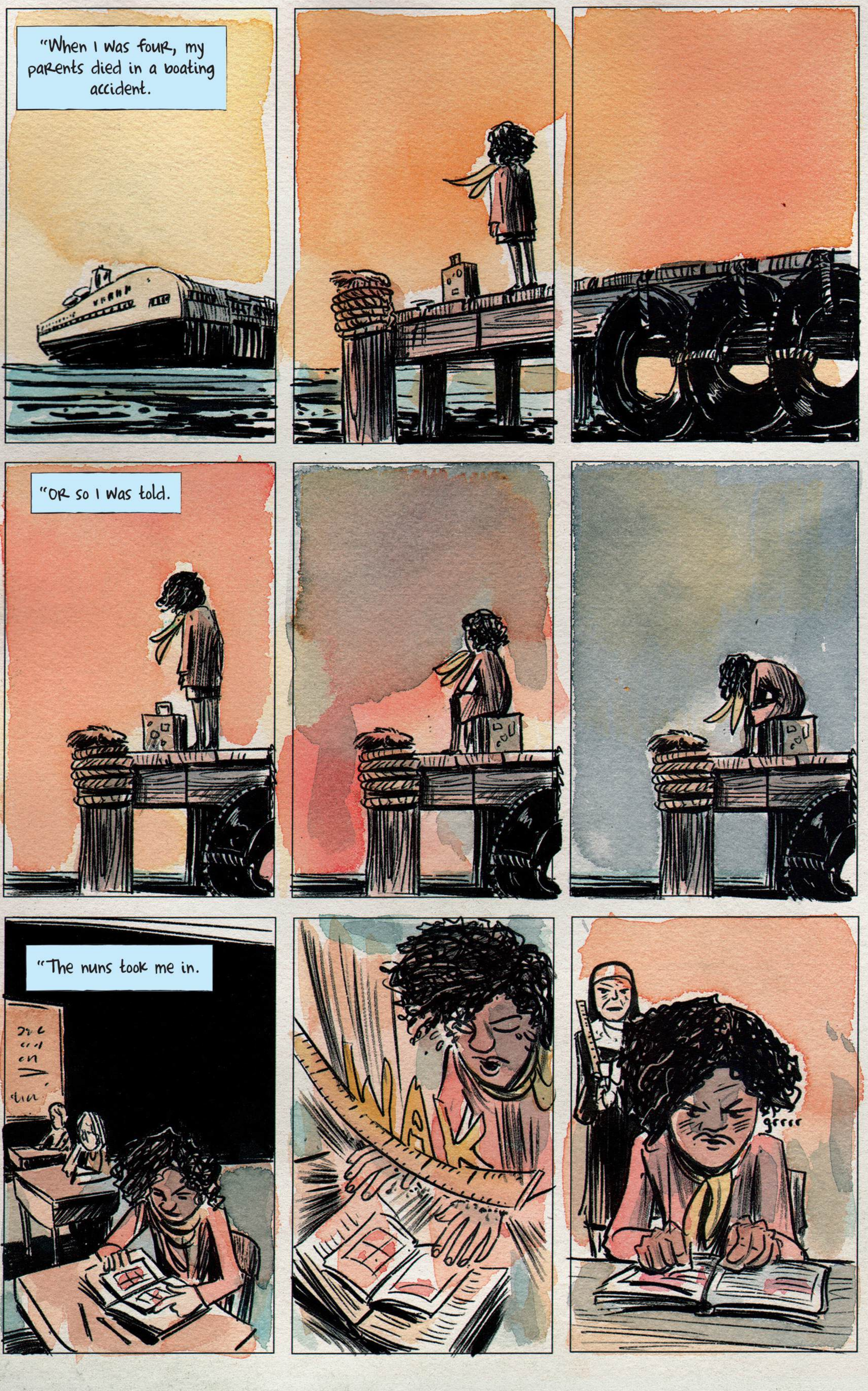
Legal Address: C/o Anouilh-Vatour Gabrie, Paris

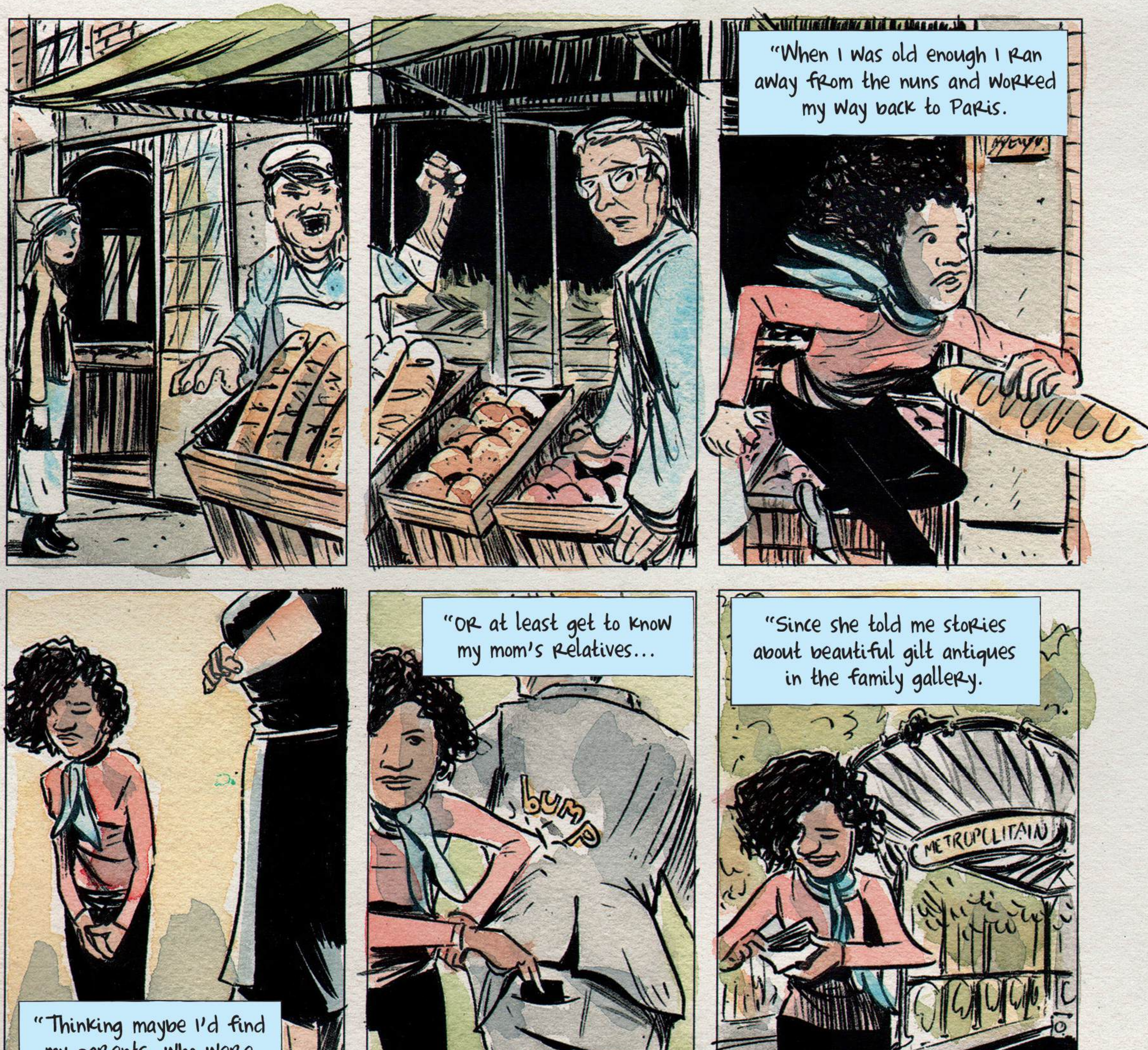
Phone Number(s) ~~Call~~ m

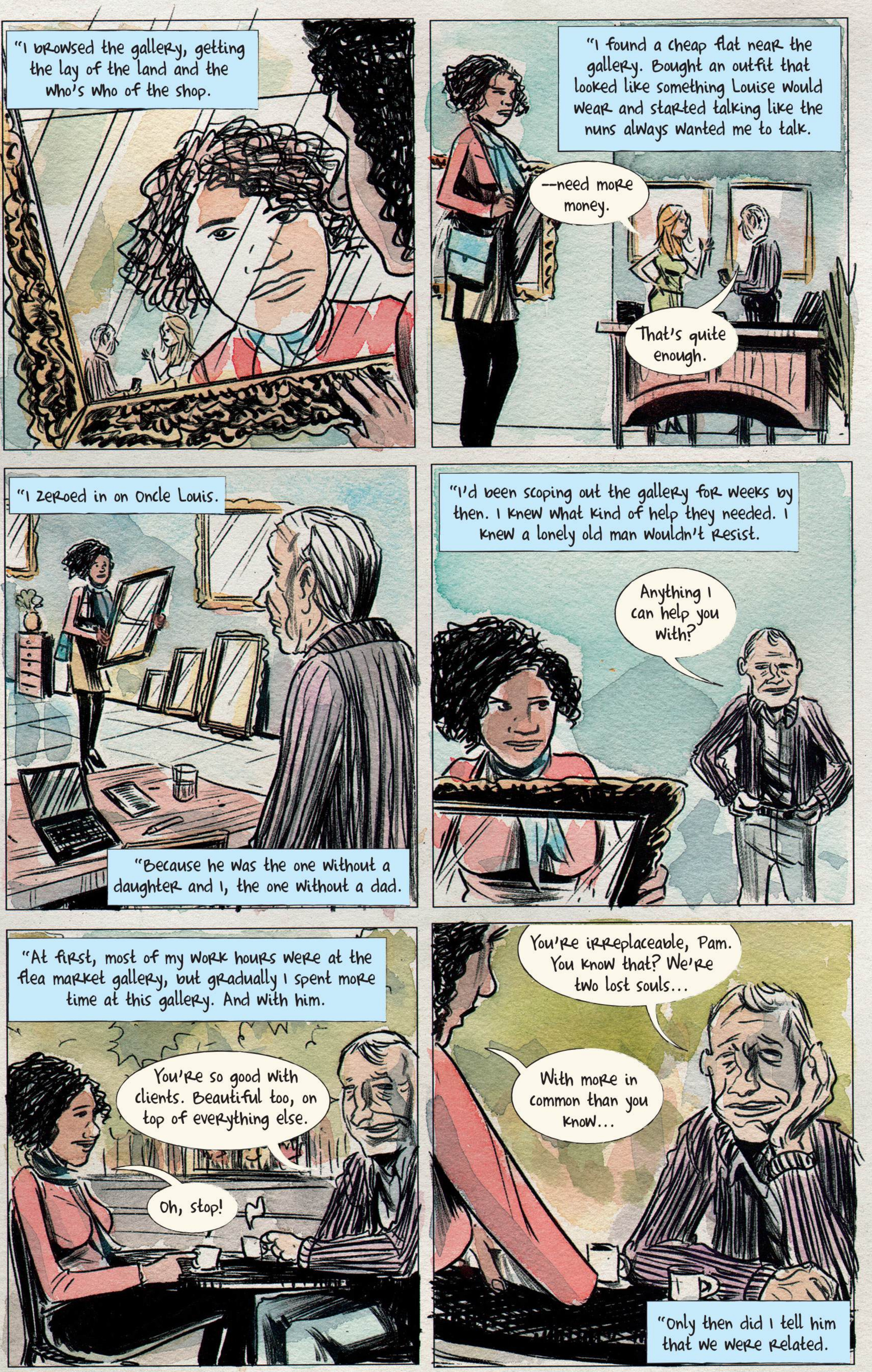
Gender: femelle
Race: Caucasian
Ethnicity: ~~français~~
Marital status: céli?bataire
Place of birth: Paris
Citizenship: de français
Educational background:
Criminal history. not really
Current physical condition: en bonne sa
Current mental health condition: " "
Prescription Medicine(s): sometimes
Alcohol or drug use history:
Current alcohol or drug use: not so much
What languages do you speak? françai
Religious affiliation: catholique
Children: when the time is righ
Closest relatives: the Vatours
Profession: représentante

If you are not a resident of Paris, whe
Why are you in Paris? work
Are you traveling with anyone?
Do you have friends or relatives in Paris? in Fr les Vatours
Have you ever been arrested? Peut-être
What time did you arrive at this site and why were y après les Policiers
After you arrived at this site, did you leave at any time? non not that I remember
What is your relationship to the victim? Il était mon oncle.
Did you notice anyone leaving the site? non
Did you touch or disturb anything at this site? Probablement
Would you voluntarily submit to a body sea forensic tests? NON
Did you witness anyth
Do


Start by telling me about yourself and your relationship to the business and the owners of the gallery.
My name is Pauline Martel and I started working here when I moved to Paris about two years ago.
Pardon me, but the others call you Pam.
Sooner or later you'll have to know my real name.
I didn't do anything wrong. Just so you know. Pam is what I've always gone by. I hated my real name.
My middle name is my mother's maiden name.
Which is?
Anouilh.
Surprised?
"My mother was born and lived here in Paris. When she was young and wild she hooked up with a Jamaican.
"The family didn't like him so we took off and ended up in Normandy.


"When I was four, my parents died in a boating accident.
"Or so I was told.
"The nuns took me in.
WAK
grrrr

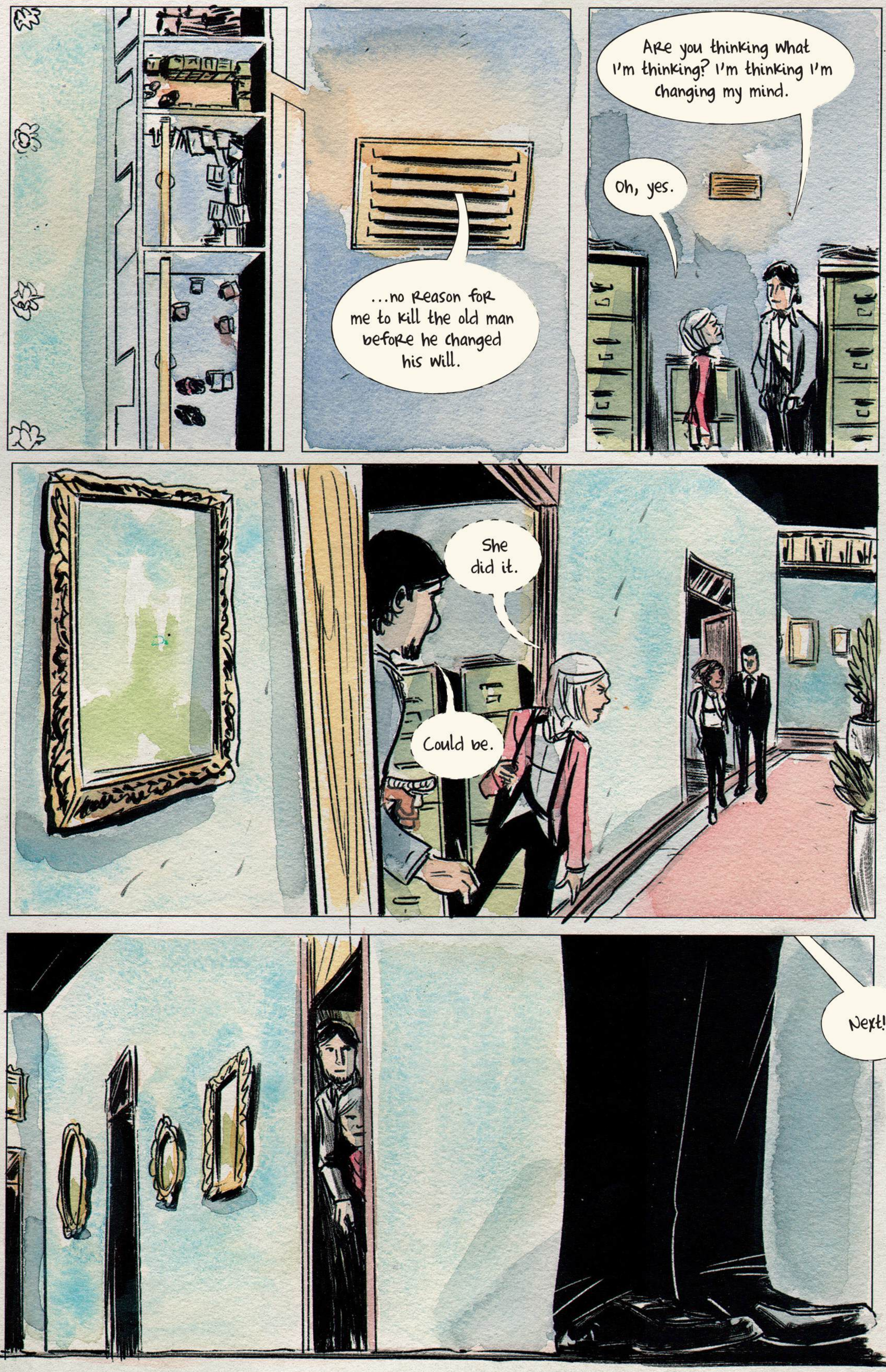

"When I was old enough I ran away from the nuns and worked my way back to Paris.
"Thinking maybe I'd find my parents, who were ashamed of having abandoned me.
"Or at least get to know my mom's relatives...
bump
"Since she told me stories about beautiful gilt antiques in the family gallery.
METROPOLITAIN
"In the meantime, I needed money.
"So I worked my ass off.
"As long as I could. The streets wore me down. Eventually it was time to approach the family gallery.
"Thinking maybe I could find work with my relatives though they knew nothing of me.


"I browsed the gallery, getting the lay of the land and the who's who of the shop.
"I found a cheap flat near the gallery. Bought an outfit that looked like something Louise would wear and started talking like the nuns always wanted me to talk.
--need more money.
That's quite enough.
"I zeroed in on Oncle Louis.
"Because he was the one without a daughter and I, the one without a dad.
"I'd been scoping out the gallery for weeks by then. I knew what kind of help they needed. I knew a lonely old man wouldn't resist.
Anything I can help you with?
"At first, most of my work hours were at the flea market gallery, but gradually I spent more time at this gallery. And with him.
You're so good with clients. Beautiful too, on top of everything else.
Oh, stop!
You're irreplaceable, Pam. You know that? We're two lost souls...
With more in common than you know...
"Only then did I tell him that we were related.

"I decided to tell him why I actually came to the gallery. I needed to know if my family lore was true. The story in my mom's old journal. The story of my Great-Great-Grandmother, a Mme Hoity-toity or something.
"At the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis.
"While Mme Hoity-Toity was there, she became a link in a jewel theft ring.
"In France's model of Versailles.
"A ring so successful that the loot would end up fundng wars and making other people rich for generations."
But my grandmother came back home empty-handed.

"The biggest stash of jewels lost. Supposedly stashed in chairs to be shipped home."
Trianon is closed, ma'am. Time to go home.
But kept in St. Louis and sent to auction. Lost to history.
A fascinating tale…
"He pooh-poohed the story but I knew from his face that he was lying.
"And instead, I knew from just looking around what the secret was.
Unfortunately all poppycock.

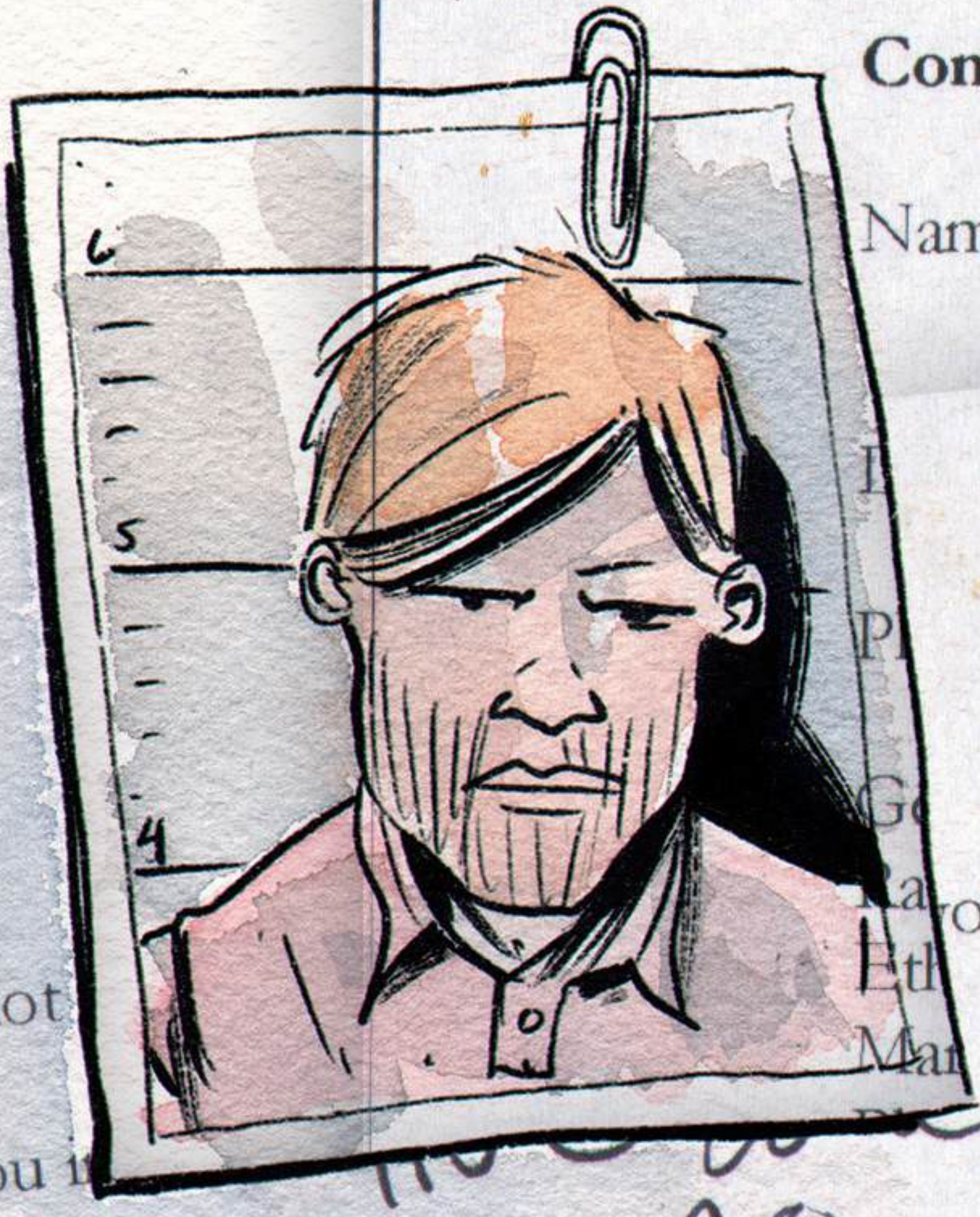
"The cousins bought every pair of turn-of-the-century fauteuils that came on the market. I knew what they were looking for.
"I told Oncle I knew and he said I was too smart for my own good.
"So I said he could cut me in or I could cut him out.
"So Oncle confided in me after all.
I'll tell you...
Okay.
"Said I had guts and went on to say that he was an old man and maybe it was time to pass the torch."
I said maybe it was fortuitous that I came along when I did.
Stop right there, mademoiselle. Let me advise you to retain counsel and to say no more, to anyone, until tomorrow when you give your deposition under oath.
At least you know there was no reason for me to kill the old man before he changed his will.


…no Reason for me to kill the old man before he changed his will.
Are you thinking what I'm thinking? I'm thinking I'm changing my mind.
Oh, yes.
She did it.
Could be.
Next!

- Do not touch anything unnecessarily, or adjust the therm
or doors.
- Do not litter or spit within the boundaries of this site.

Complete the following form

Name: Huxley Aldo
(Last) (First)



P

G

Ra

Eth

Mar

If you are not ... you staying and where can you be reached?

Why are you ... work here

Are you traveling with anyone? no

Do you have friends or relatives in Paris? in France? plenty

Have you ever been arrested? maybe - to your job.

What time did you arrive at this site and why were you here? right after Louise called

After you arrived at this site, did you leave at any time? no

What is your relationship to the victim? none

Did you notice anyone leaving the site? no

Did you touch or disturb anything at this site? well no

Would you voluntarily submit to a body search, DNA sample, lie detector test, or fingerprinting and forensic tests? no - get a warrant

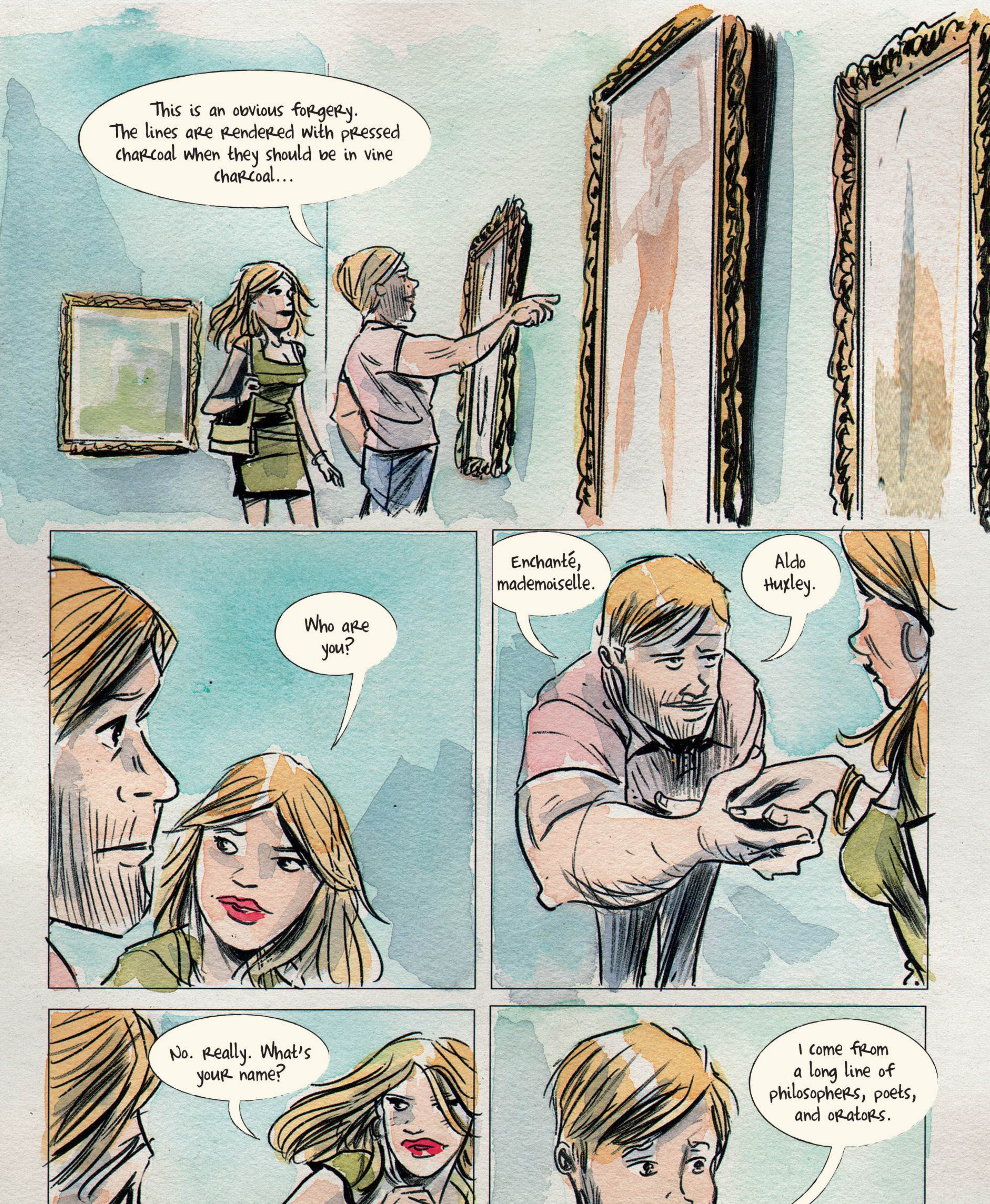
Did you witness anything that would be helpful in this investigation? ~~snitches~~ - stitches

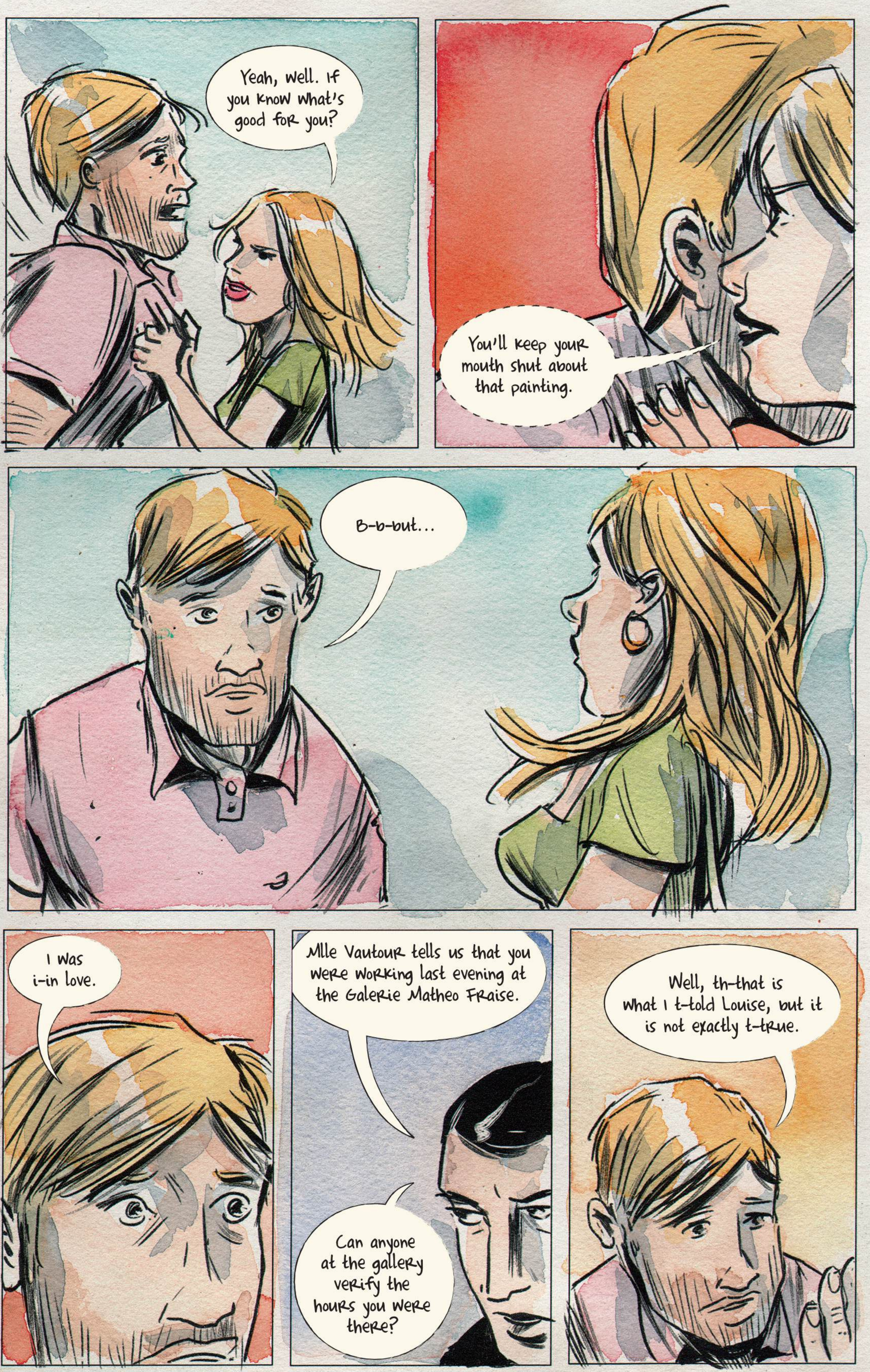
Do you have any specific knowledge that would be helpful in this investigation?

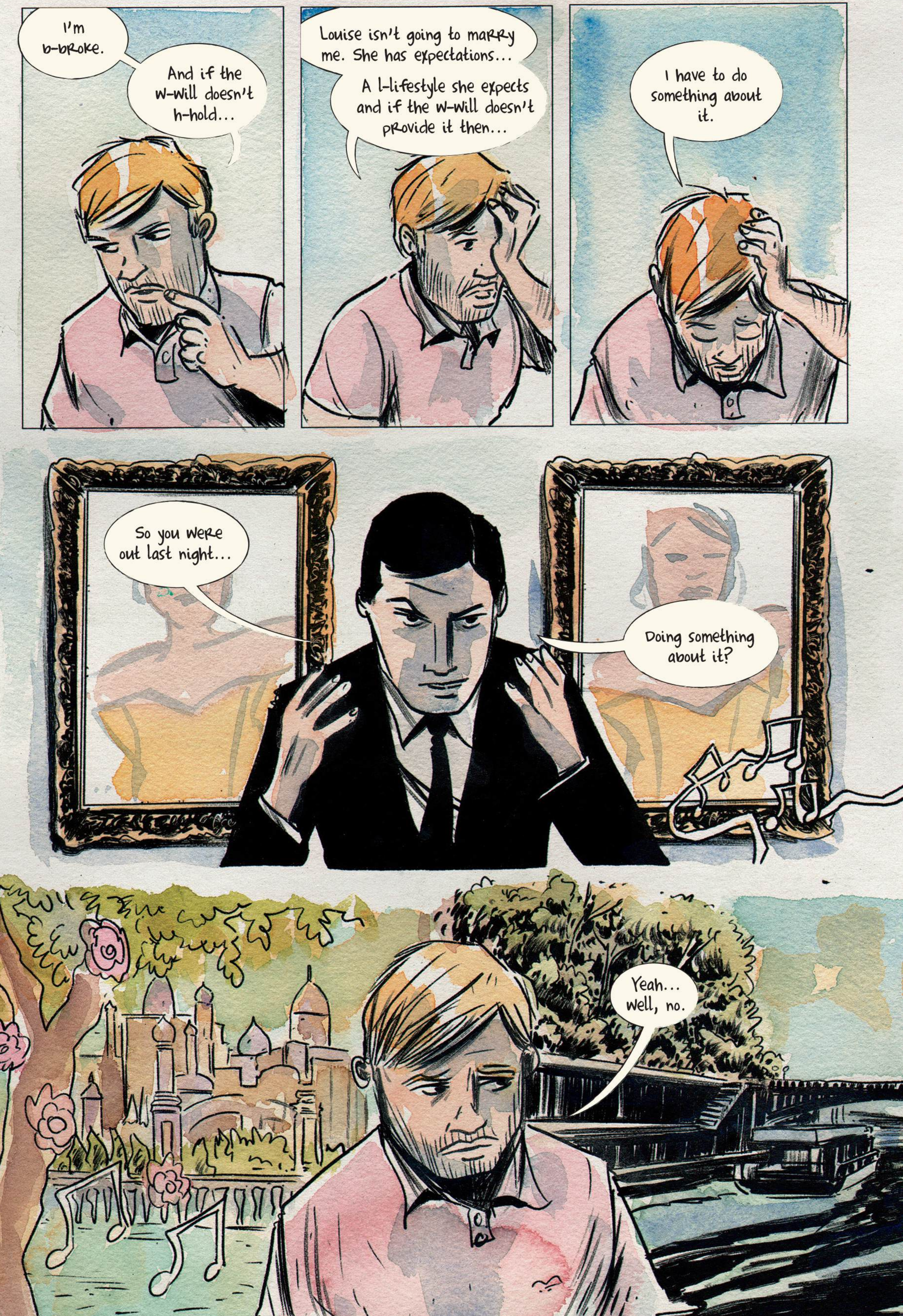
Tell me about yourself.

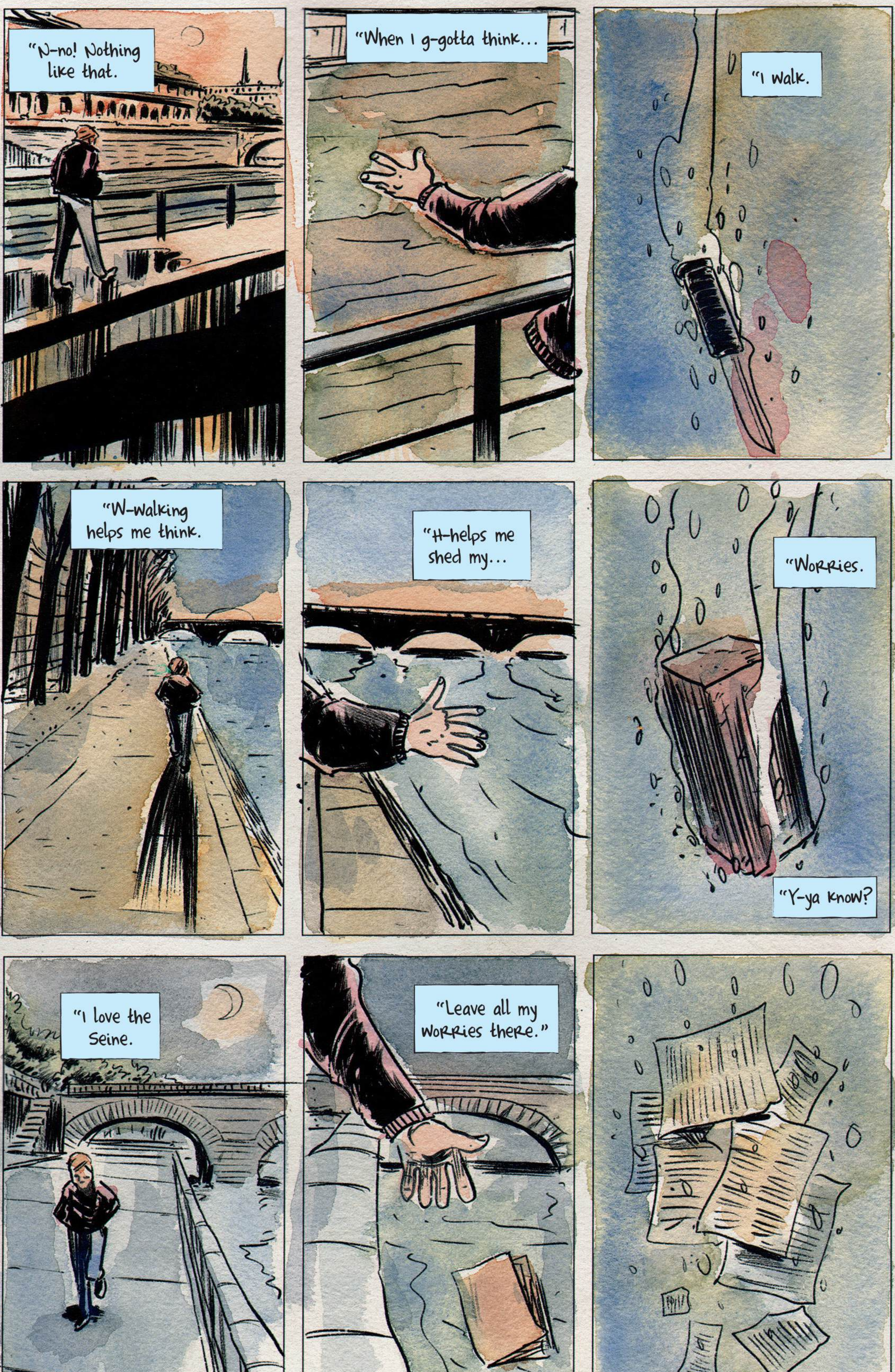
successful corporate assistant with a hot fiance - what more could you

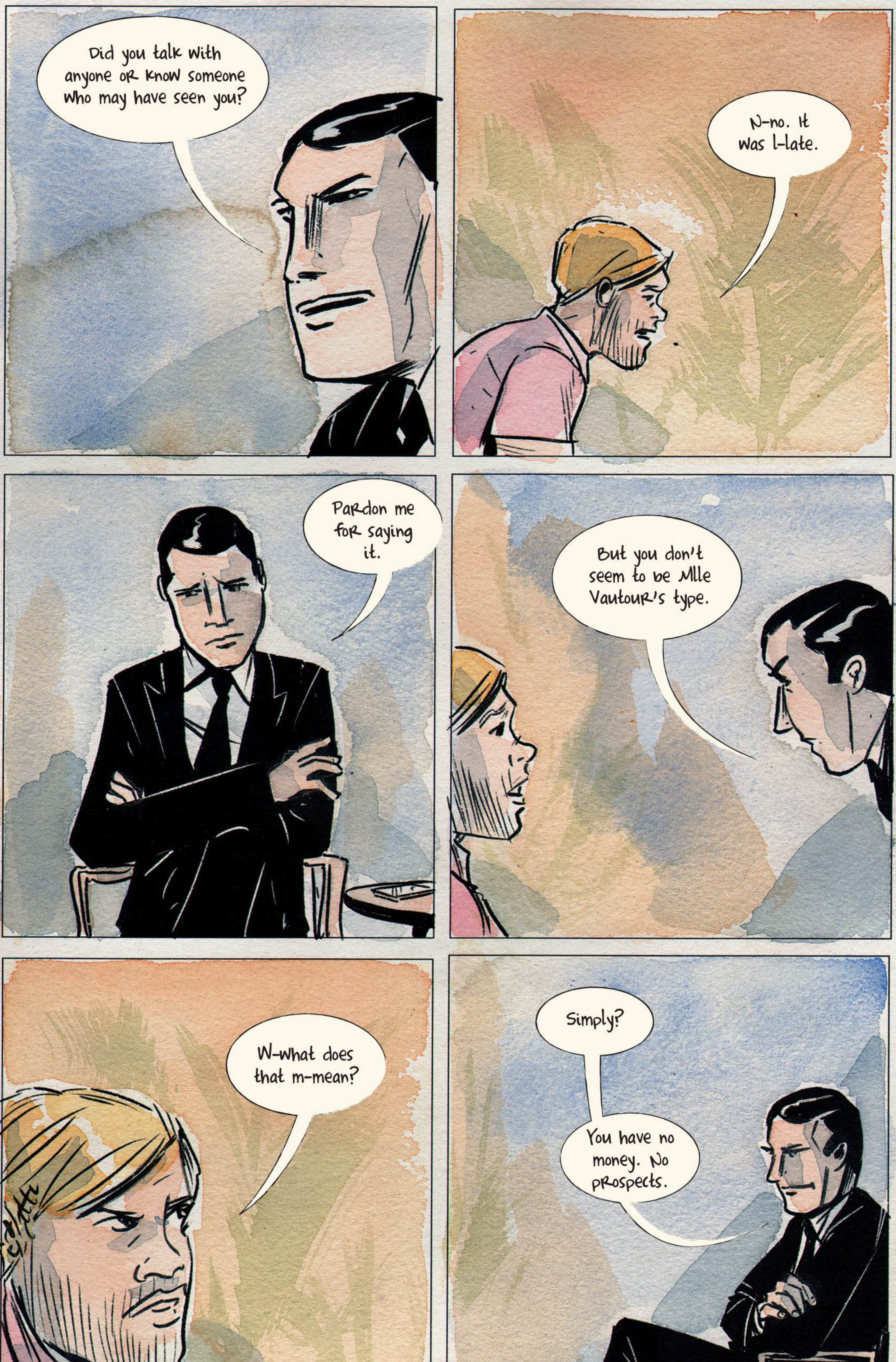
So Aldo...as you fill out this form, let me ask a question.
How did you get connected to this family?
It was through m-my dearest L-Louise. We m-met at an art exhibition.
I was f-finishing my thesis on Auguste Rodin and L-Louise was standing next to me.
"I asked her what attracted her to R-Rodin's work and she said she wasn't.
"She was just there as a favor to a friend and she knew the w-wine and cheese would be g-good."

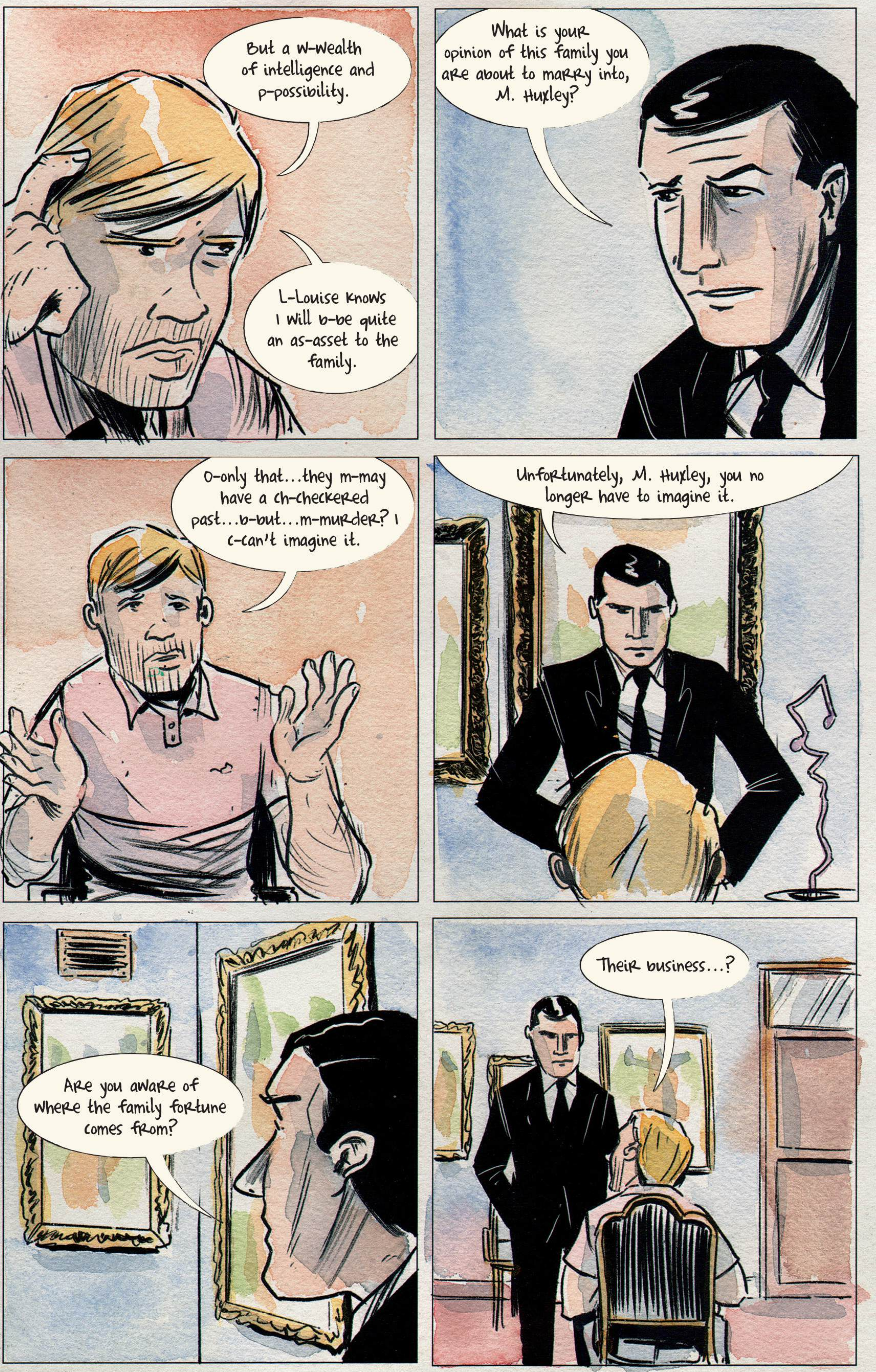

This is an obvious forgery. The lines are rendered with pressed charcoal when they should be in vine charcoal…
Who are you?
Enchanté, mademoiselle.
Aldo Huxley.
No. Really. What's your name?
I come from a long line of philosophers, poets, and orators.


Yeah, well. If you know what's good for you?
You'll keep your mouth shut about that painting.
B-b-but...
I was i-in love.
Mlle Vautour tells us that you were working last evening at the Galerie Matheo Fraise.
Can anyone at the gallery verify the hours you were there?
Well, th-that is what I t-told Louise, but it is not exactly t-true.

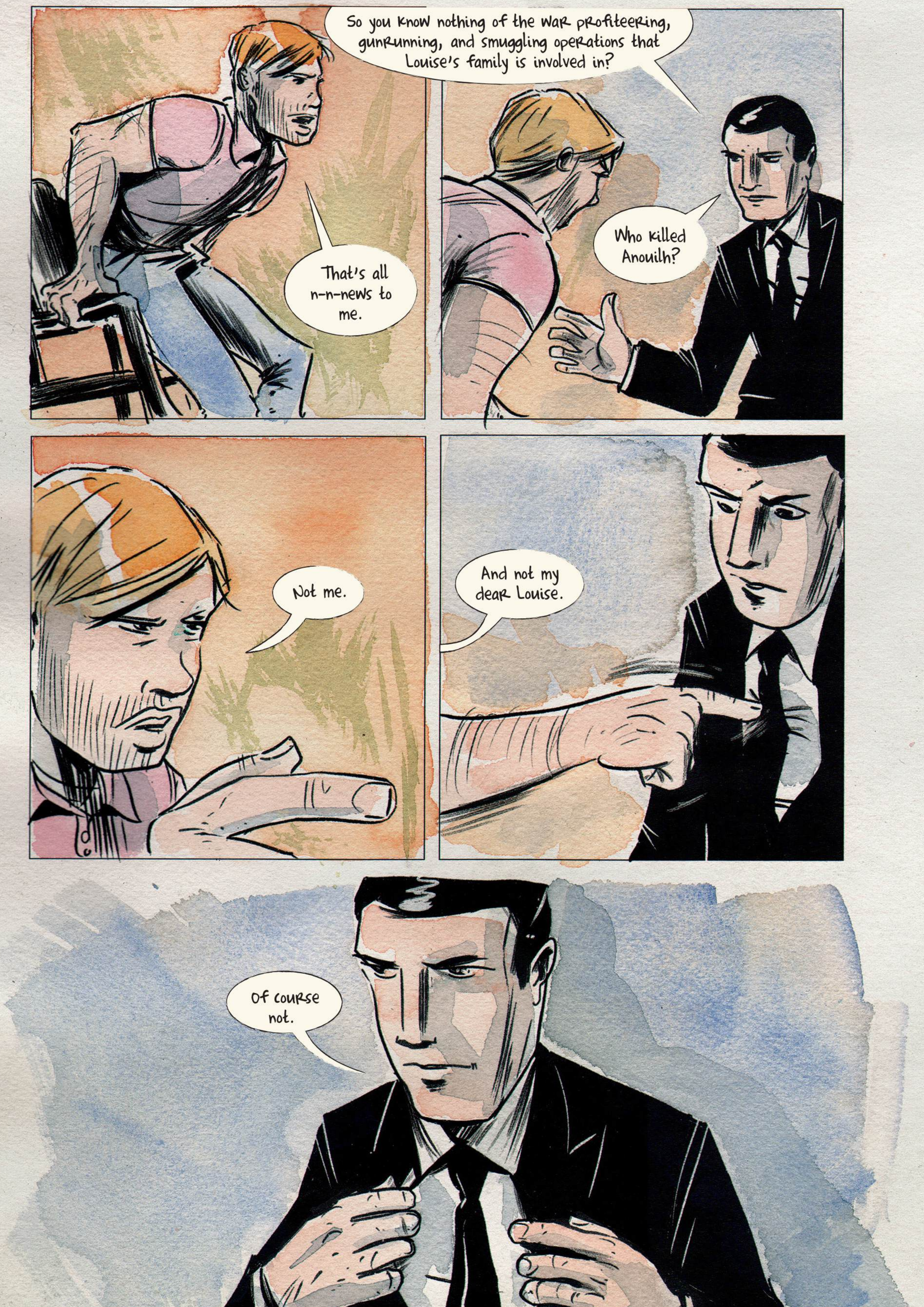

I'm b-broke.
And if the w-will doesn't h-hold...
Louise isn't going to marry me. She has expectations...
A l-lifestyle she expects and if the w-will doesn't provide it then...
I have to do something about it.
So you were out last night...
Doing something about it?
Yeah... well, no.

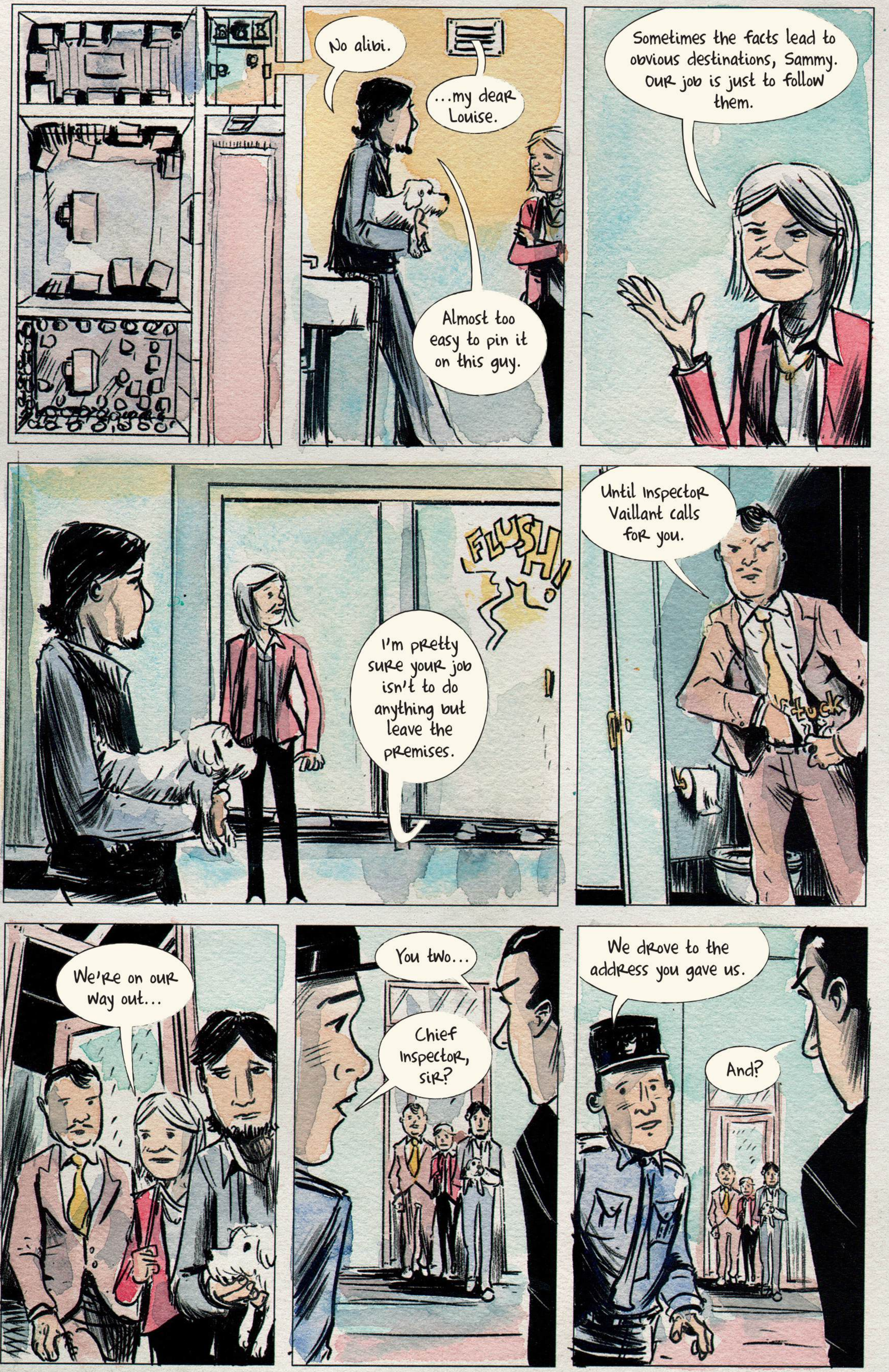

"N-no! Nothing like that.
"When I g-gotta think...
"I walk.
"W-walking helps me think.
"H-helps me shed my...
"Worries.
"Y-ya know?
"I love the Seine.
"Leave all my worries there."

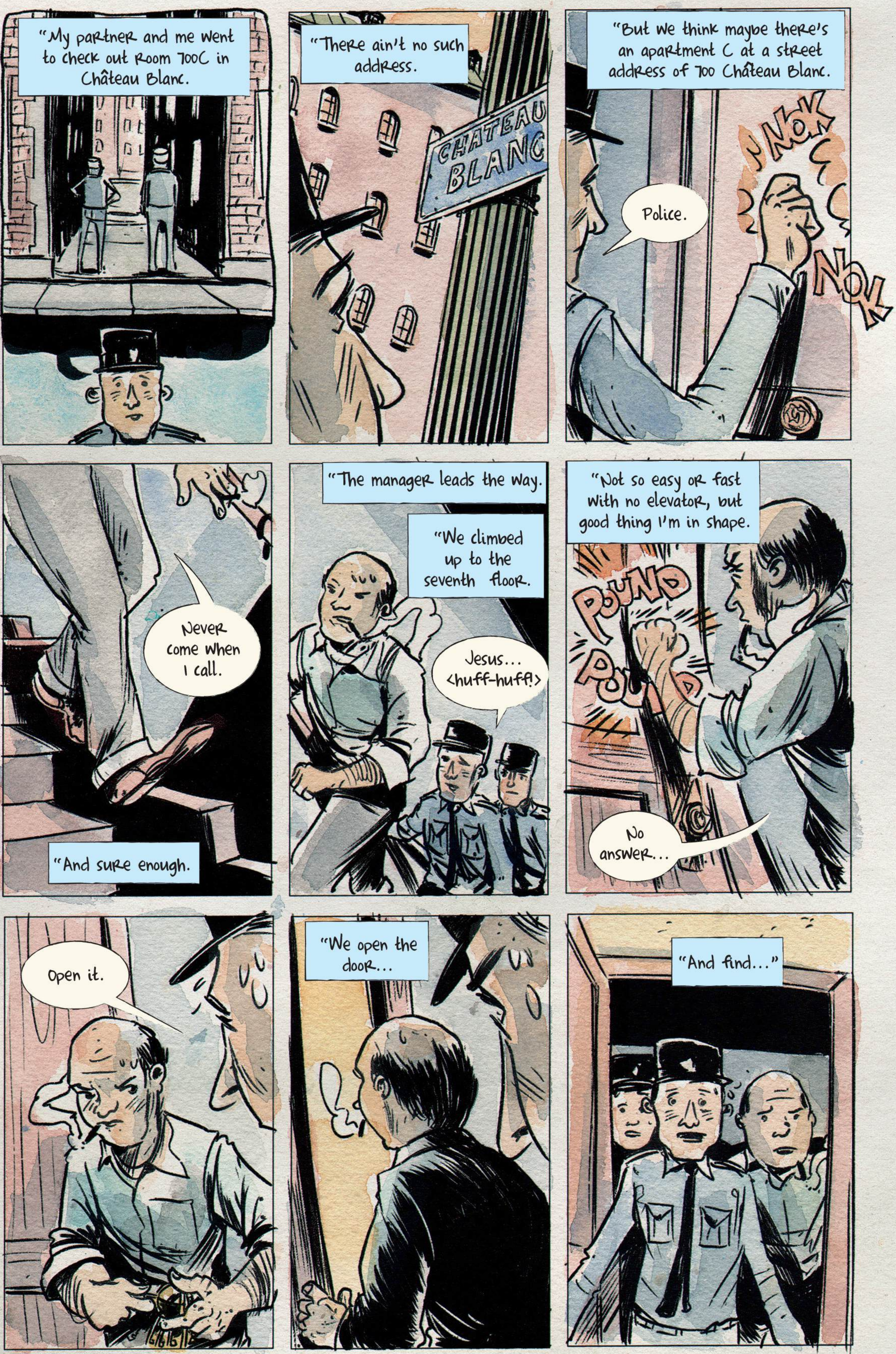

Did you talk with anyone or know someone who may have seen you?
N-no. It was l-late.
Pardon me for saying it.
But you don't seem to be Mlle Vautour's type.
W-what does that m-mean?
Simply?
You have no money. No prospects.


But a w-wealth of intelligence and p-possibility.
L-Louise knows I will b-be quite an as-asset to the family.
What is your opinion of this family you are about to marry into, M. Huxley?
O-only that…they m-may have a ch-checkered past…b-but…m-murder? I c-can't imagine it.
Unfortunately, M. Huxley, you no longer have to imagine it.
Are you aware of where the family fortune comes from?
Their business…?

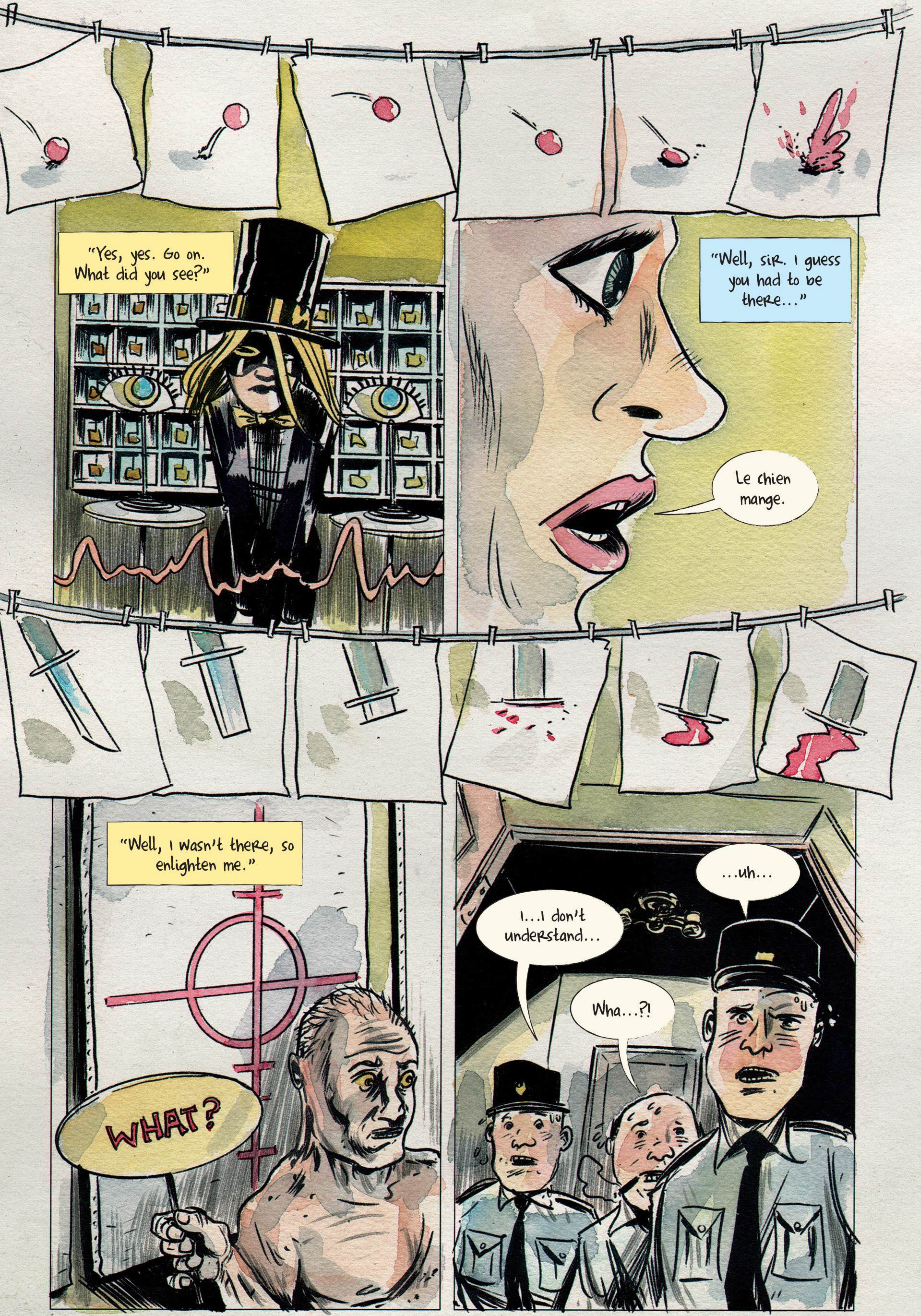
"Their business.
Nothing but vases, Officer.
"Pharmaceuticals.
Here's to War!
Cheers!
"Manufacturing.
Beautiful.
"And my personal favorite...
We've been Robbed!
A perfect copy.
"Art."


So you know nothing of the war profiteering, gunrunning, and smuggling operations that Louise's family is involved in?
That's all n-n-news to me.
Who killed Anouilh?
Not me.
And not my dear Louise.
Of course not.

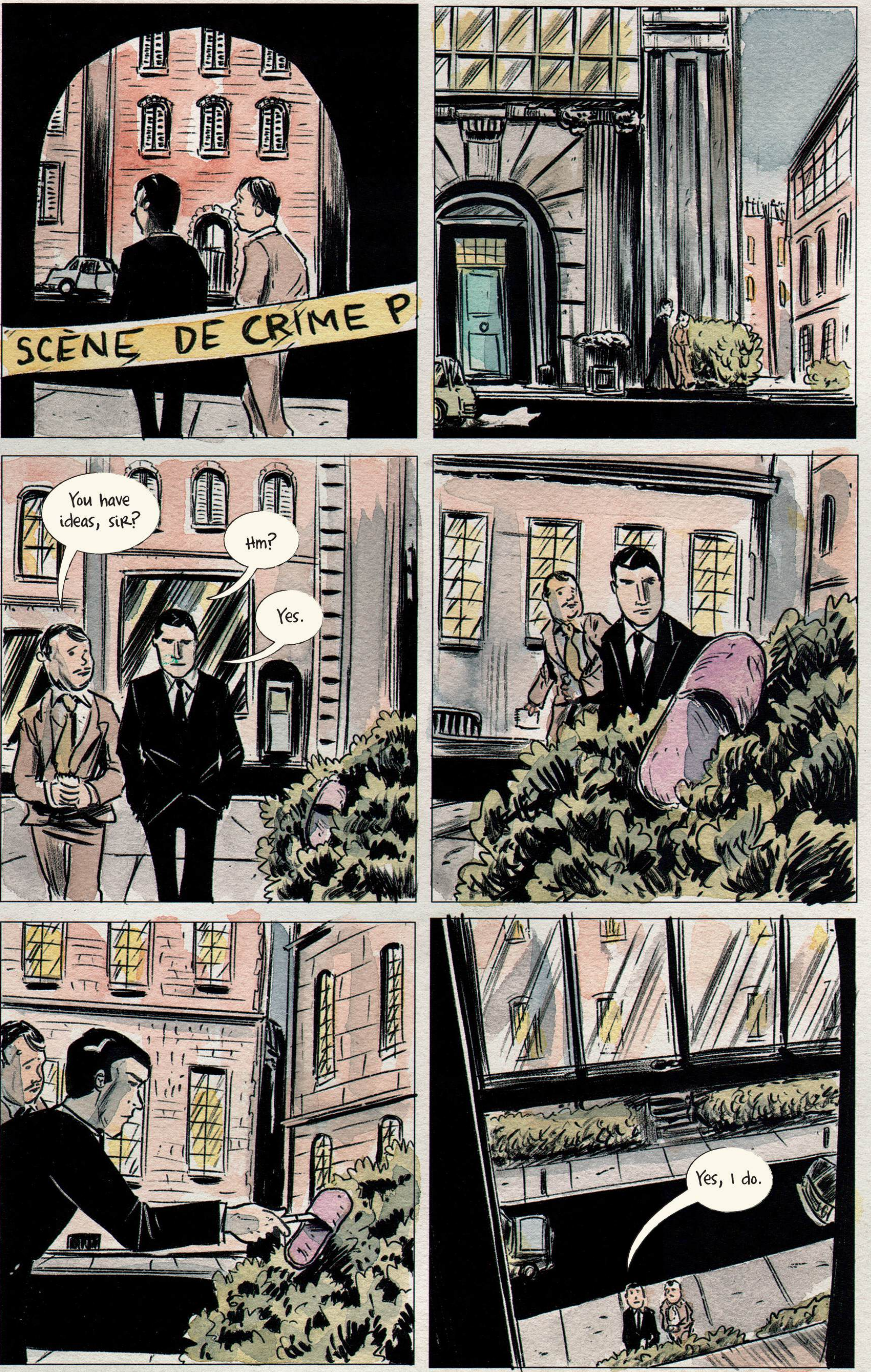

No alibi.
...my dear Louise.
Almost too easy to pin it on this guy.
Sometimes the facts lead to obvious destinations, Sammy. Our job is just to follow them.
FLUSH!
I'm pretty sure your job isn't to do anything but leave the premises.
Until Inspector Vaillant calls for you.
We're on our way out...
You two...
Chief Inspector, sir?
We drove to the address you gave us.
And?

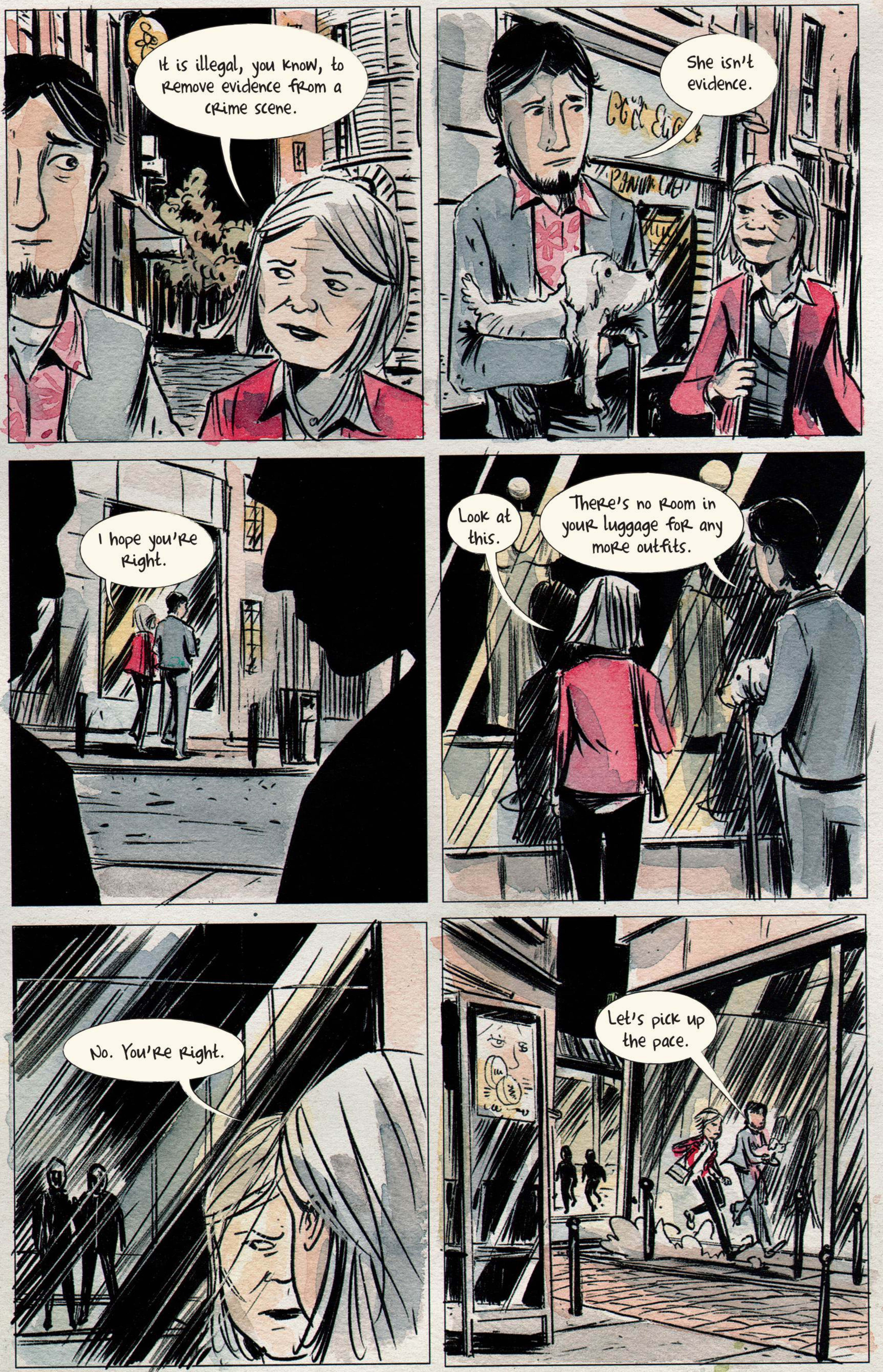

"My partner and me went to check out Room 700C in Château Blanc.
"There ain't no such address.
CHATEAU BLANC
"But we think maybe there's an apartment C at a street address of 700 Château Blanc.
NOK
Police.
NOK
Never come when I call.
"And sure enough.
"The manager leads the way.
"We climbed up to the seventh floor.
Jesus... <huff-huff!>
"Not so easy or fast with no elevator, but good thing I'm in shape.
POUND
POUND
No answer...
Open it.
"We open the door...
"And find..."

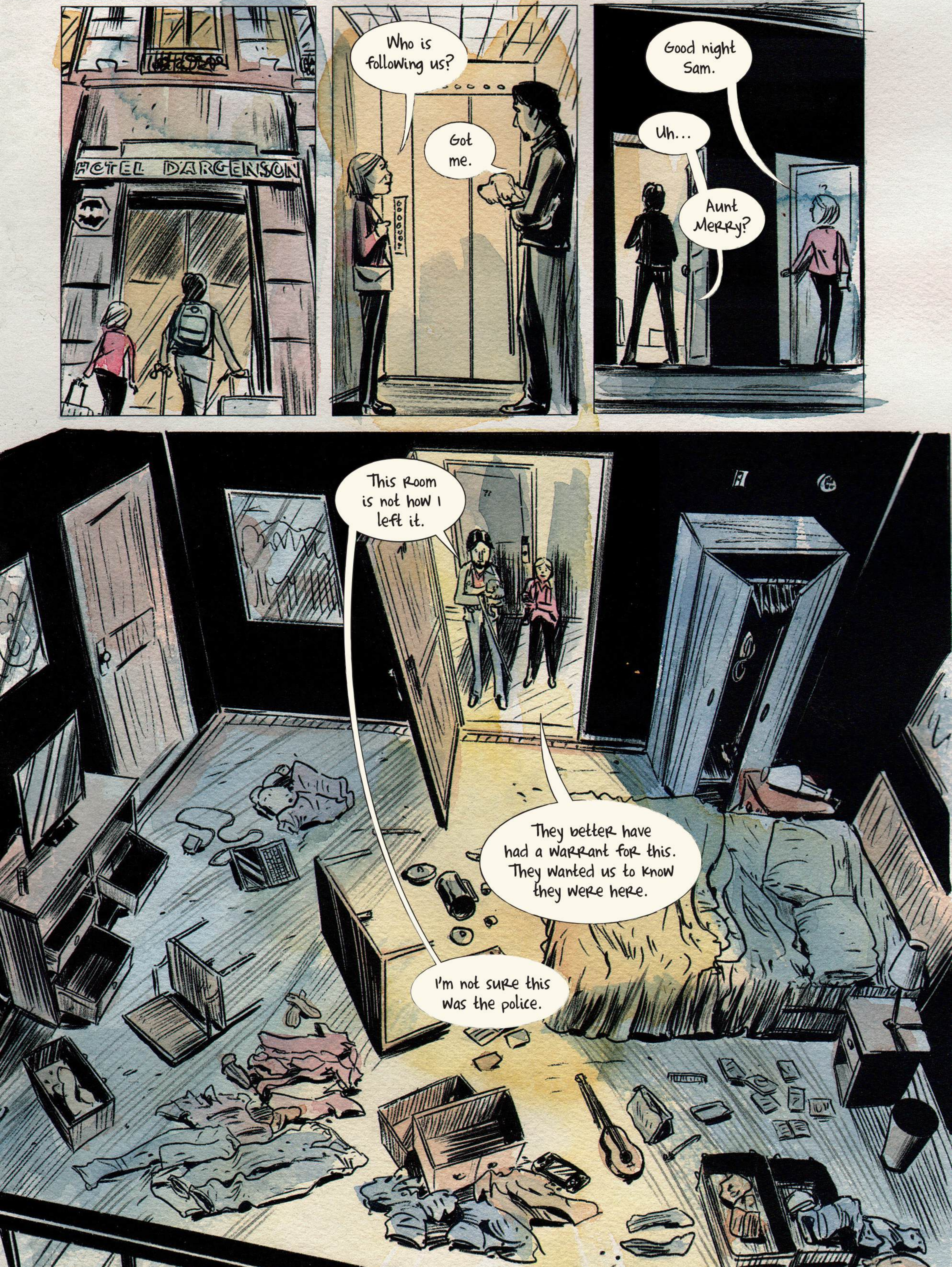
EEEE!


"Yes, yes. Go on. What did you see?"
"Well, sir. I guess you had to be there..."
Le chien mange.
"Well, I wasn't there, so enlighten me."
WHAT?
...uh...
I...I don't understand...
Wha...?!

These moviemakers were…doing stuff like nothing I never saw before.
Freaky stuff.
"Stuff" that has nothing to do with the case…
No, sir. Seemed unrelated.
Huh?! You!
Get outta here! The next time I find the two of you lurking around I'm arresting you for obstructing an investigation!
Cadieux. Lock up the place.
Let's call it a day.


SCÈNE DE CRIME P
You have ideas, sir?
Hm?
Yes.
Yes, I do.


It is illegal, you know, to remove evidence from a crime scene.
She isn't evidence.
I hope you're right.
Look at this.
There's no room in your luggage for any more outfits.
No. You're right.
Let's pick up the pace.


HOTEL DARGENSON
Who is following us?
Got me.
Good night Sam.
Uh...
Aunt Merry?
This Room is not how I left it.
They better have had a warrant for this. They wanted us to know they were here.
I'm not sure this was the police.

Inspector Aloïs Vaillant

Born under the sixth sign of the zodiac, Virgos are known for attention to detail and a perfectionist mindset. Sensible, smart, sophisticated, confident, ambitious, and hardworking. Virgo's critical nature is ideal for catching every flaw and error—nothing gets by Virgo.

1980—Birth of Aloïs Vaillant

Monster of Montmartre fails exams and drops out of school

1984—Aloïs's mother notices a spider squashed against a nursery wall, its remains outlined with a red crayon

Monster of Montmartre murders eight elderly women in the eighteenth arrondissement

1987—Aloïs wins le cordon bleu for his science fair project, a forensic science kit: jeweler's loupe, evidence bags and labels, eyedropper, test tubes, fingerprint powder, Q-Tips, glass slides, plaster of Paris, flashlight, crime scene tape

Monster of Montmartre arrested and accused of committing eighteen murders, but claims responsibility for twenty-one

1989—Aloïs points out to mother the fine gravel on windowsill in older brother's bedroom—brother grounded one week for climbing out on roof

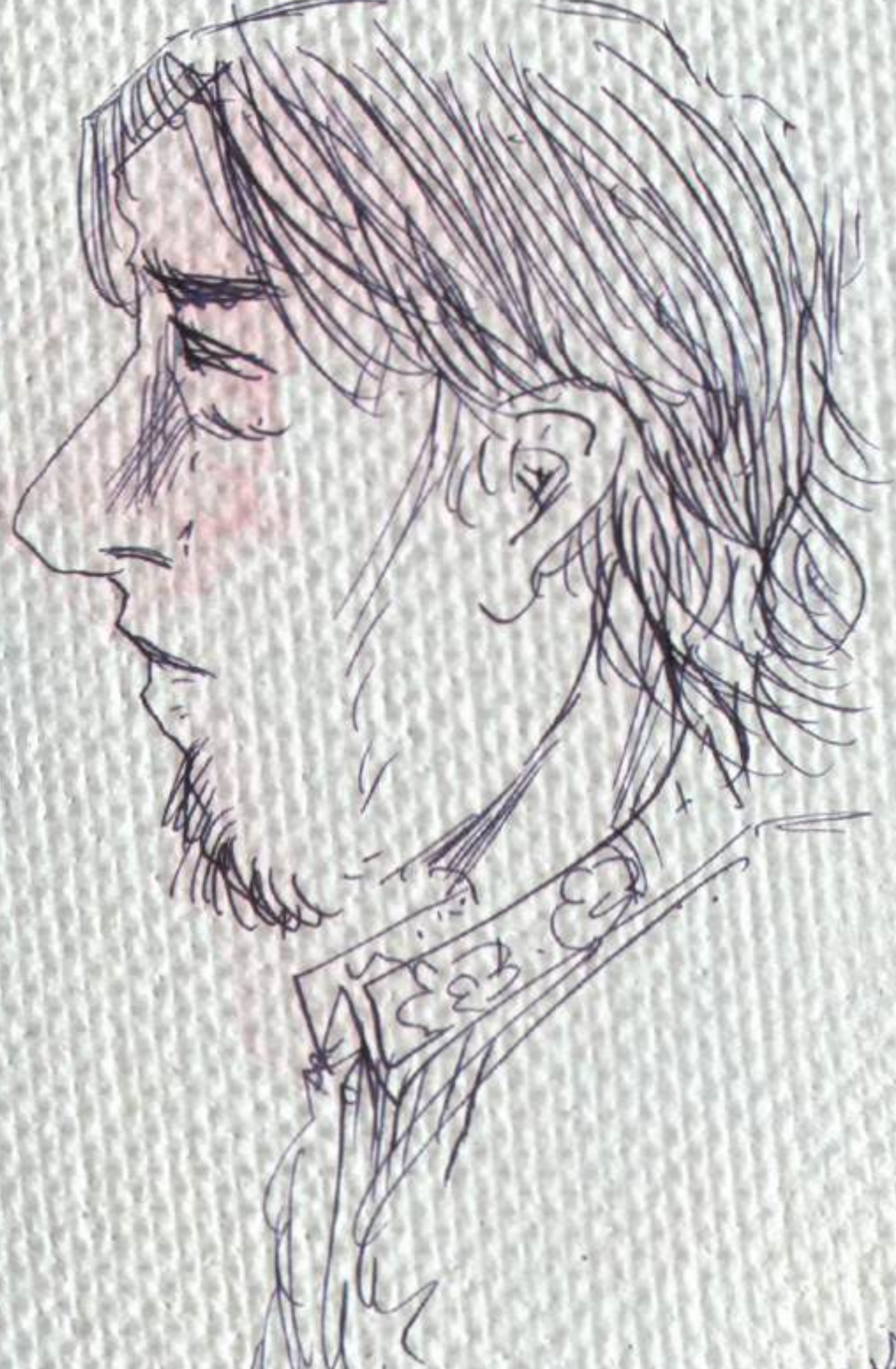
Monster of Montmartre dies in Fresnes Prison, Fresnes, France, while awaiting trial

1992—Aloïs founds a Sherlockian scion and organizes neighborhood playmates to walk a beat in their arrondissement

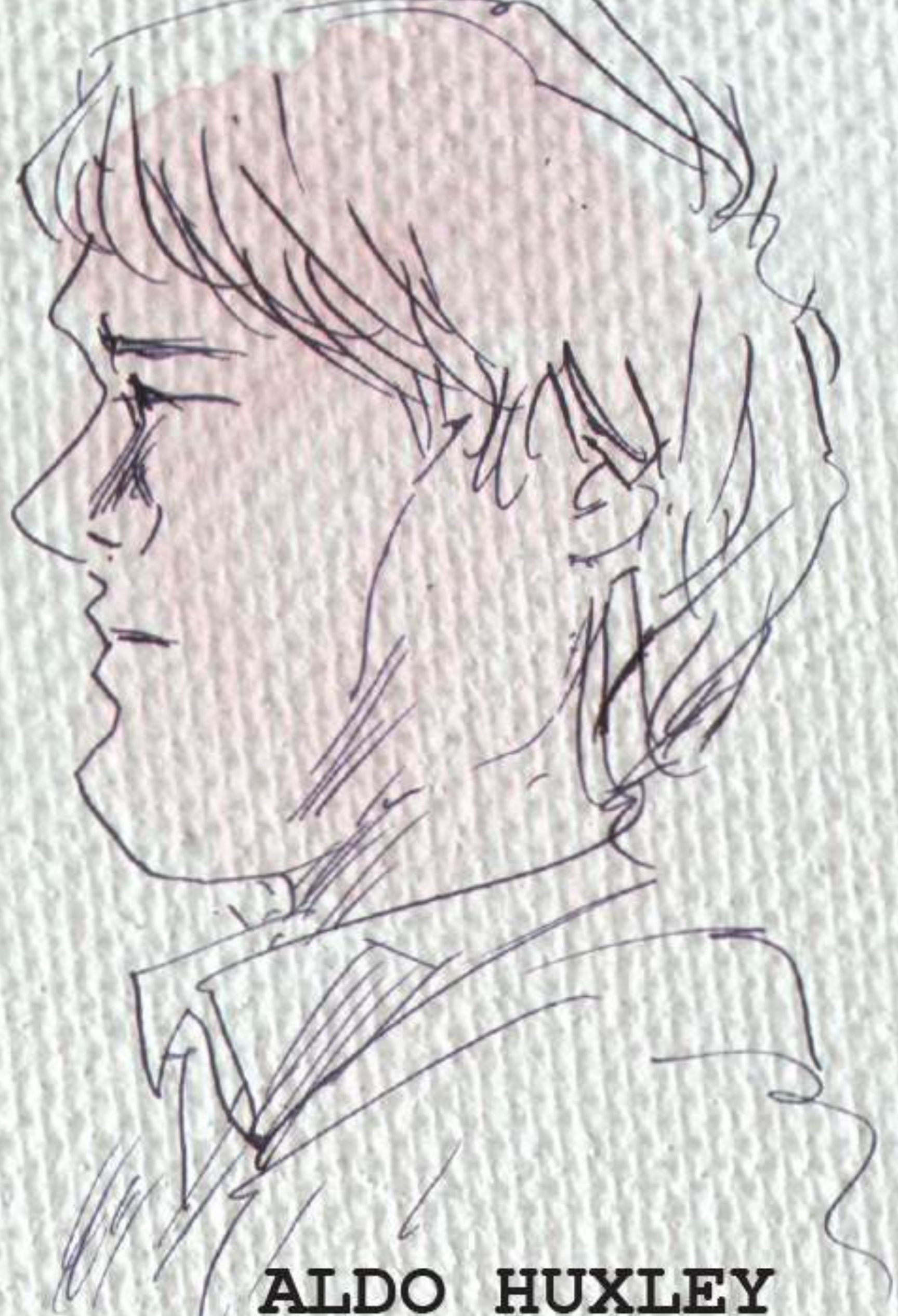
1993—Aloïs attends movie theatre release of *Son of the Pink Panther* and watches with disgust as his friends laugh at Inspector Jacques Clouseau; Aloïs looks into age requirement for École Nationale Supérieure de la Police

> "It is the stars, the stars above us, govern our conditions."
>
> —William Shakespeare, *King Lear*

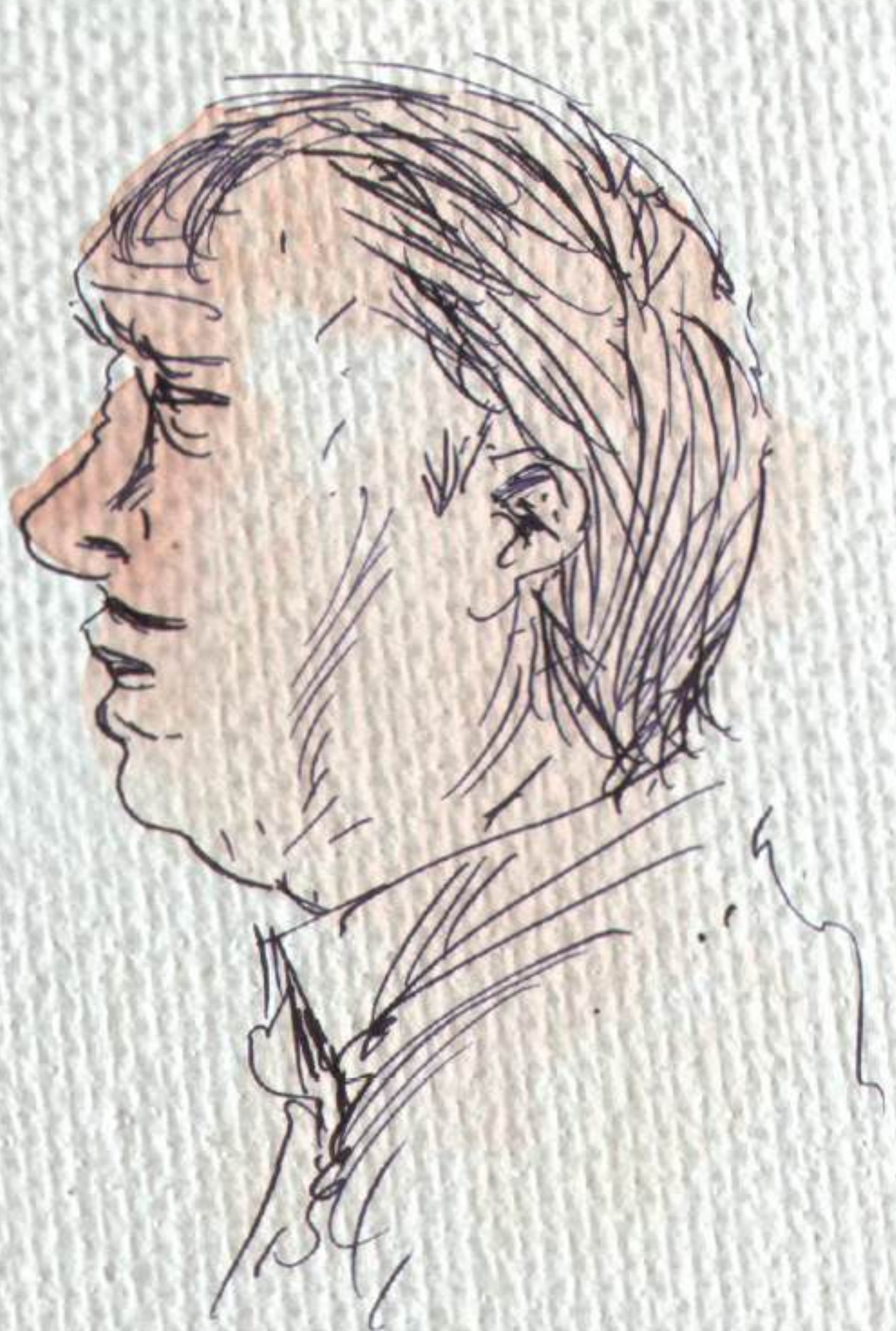
The Suspects



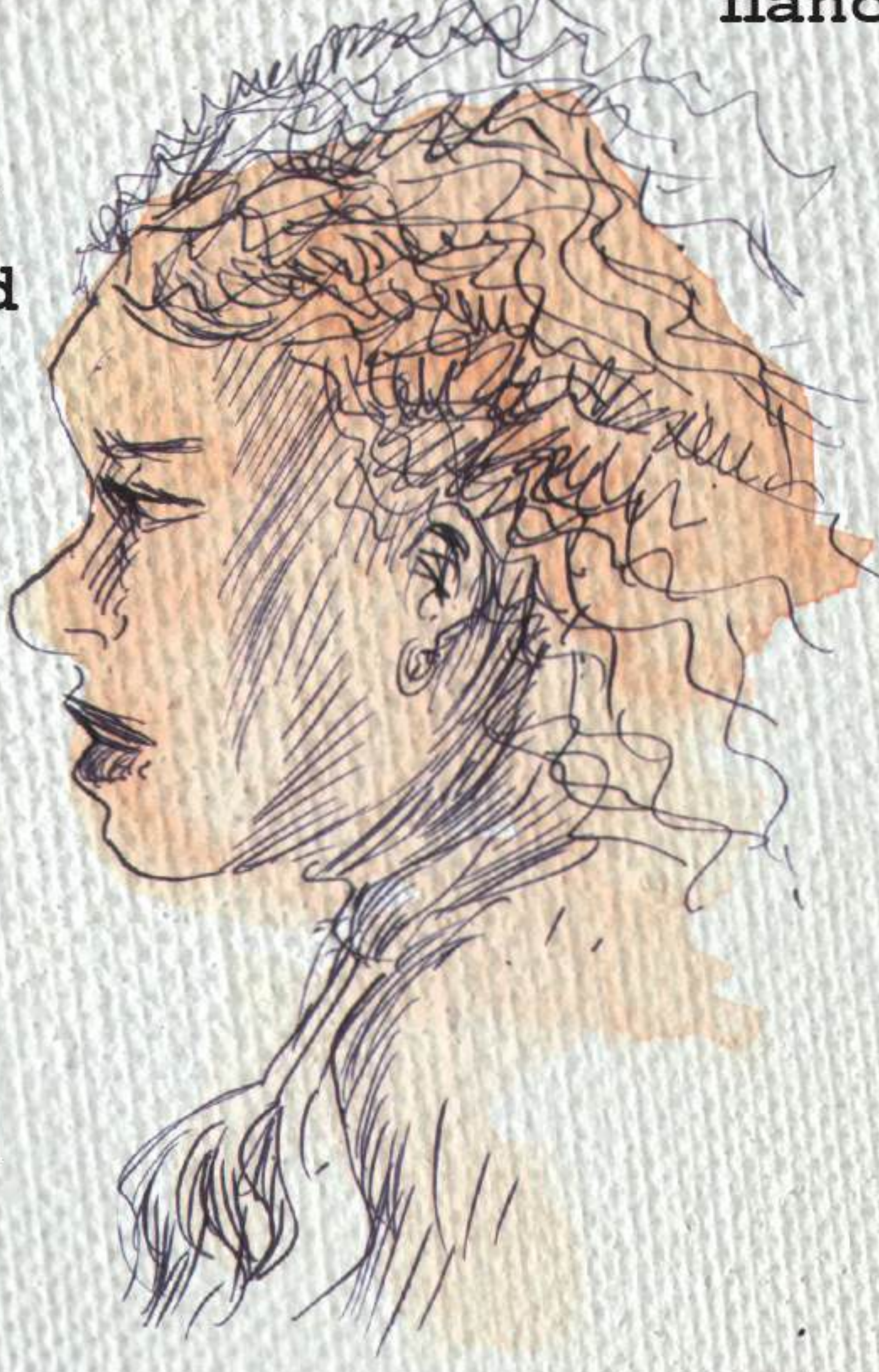
SAMSON PEARSON art student and great-nephew of Meredith (age 24)



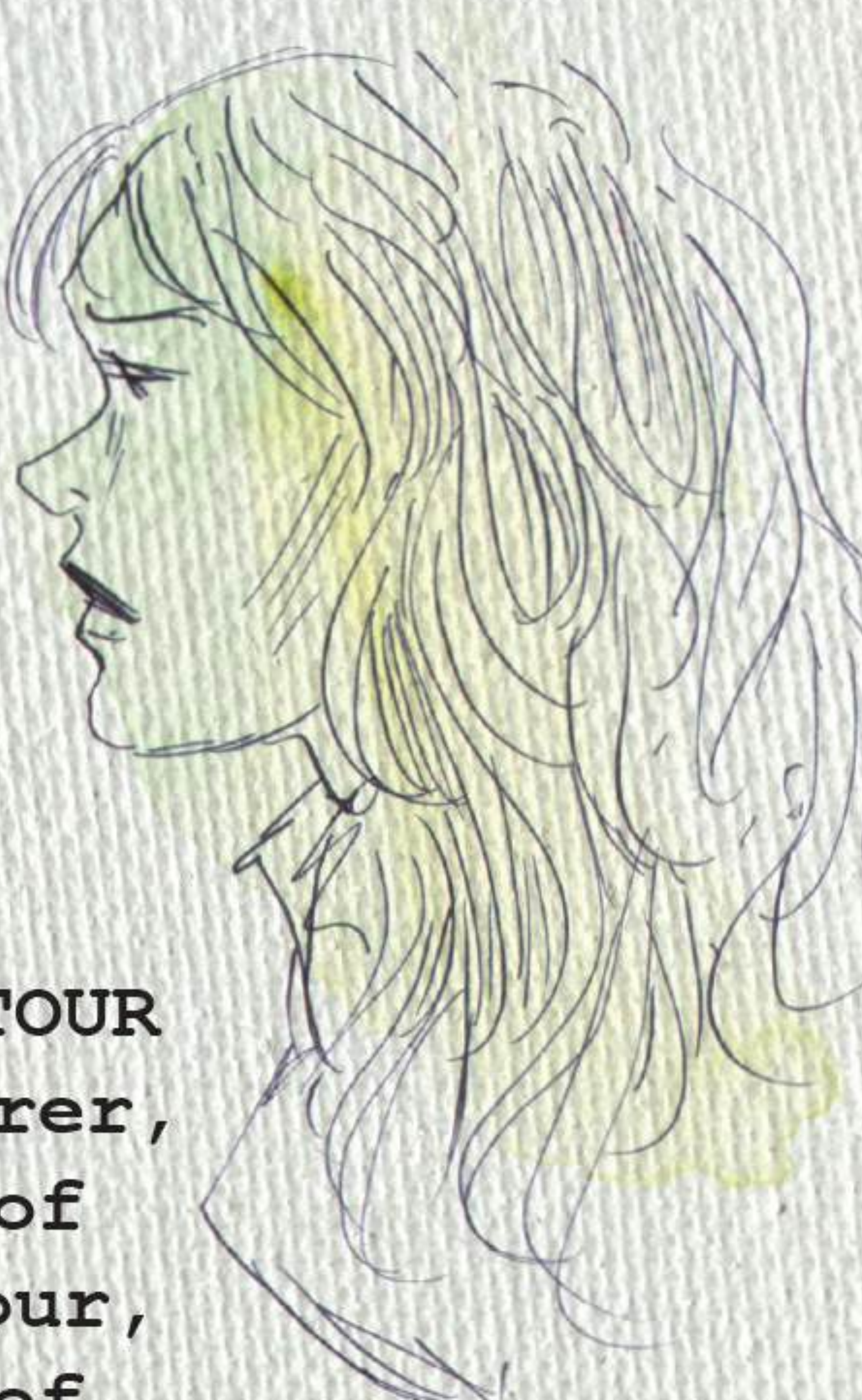
ALDO HUXLEY assistant to M. Fraise and fiancé of Louise Vautour (age 29)



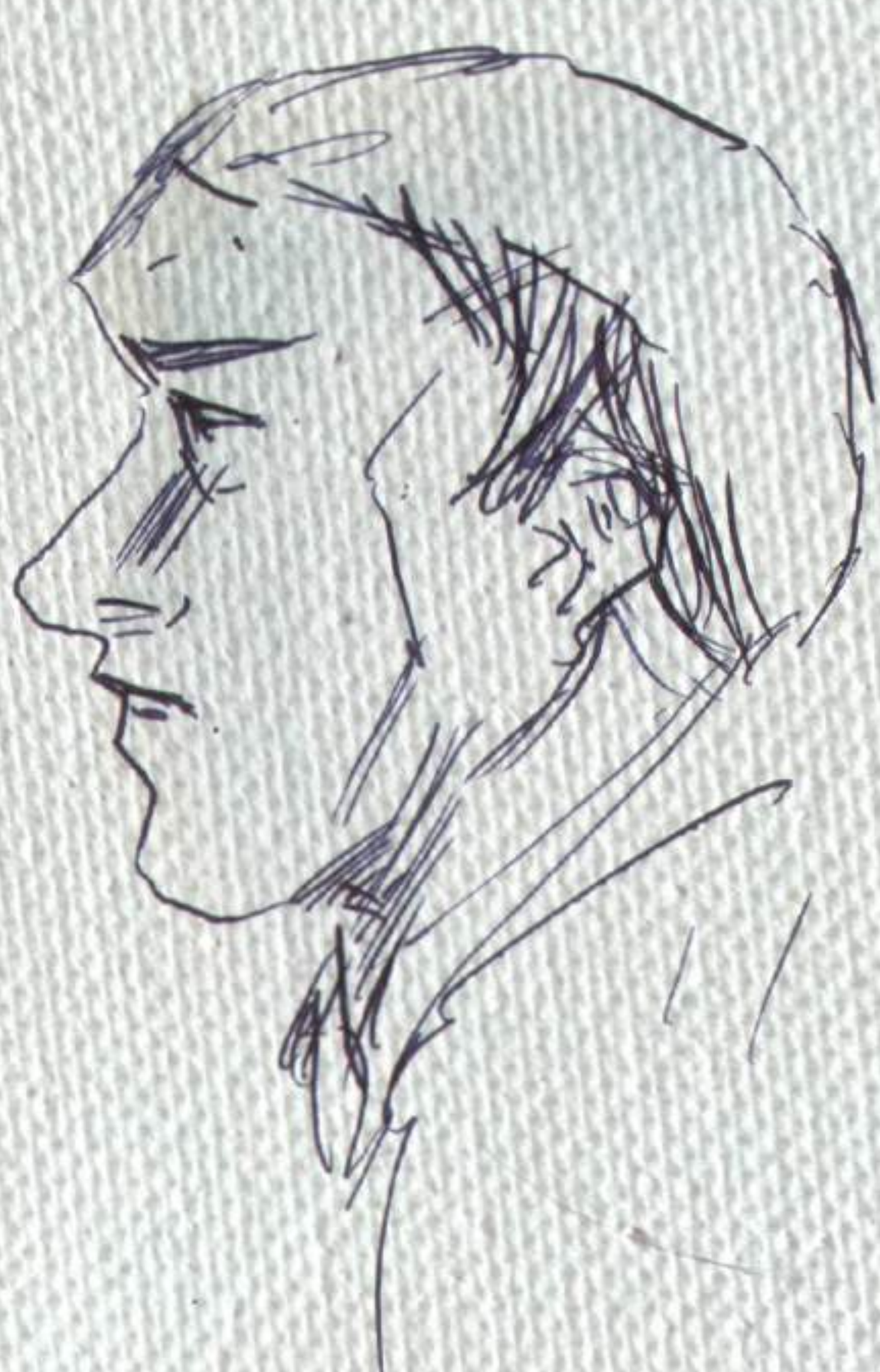
DETECTIVE THÉO CADIEUX assistant to Chief Inspector Vaillant (age 28)



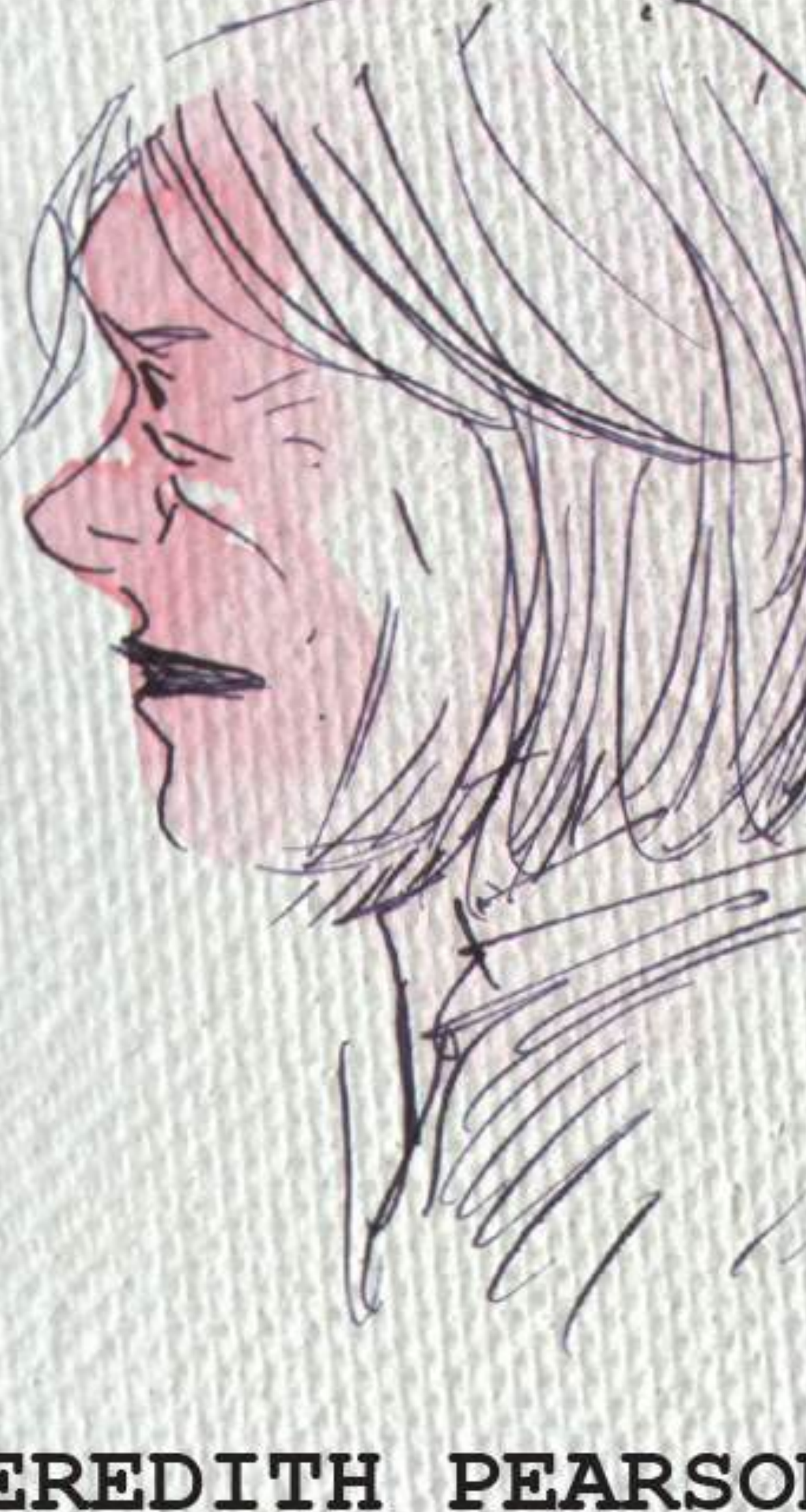
PAULINE “PAM” MARTEL assistant to M. Anouilh and M. Vautour (age 30)



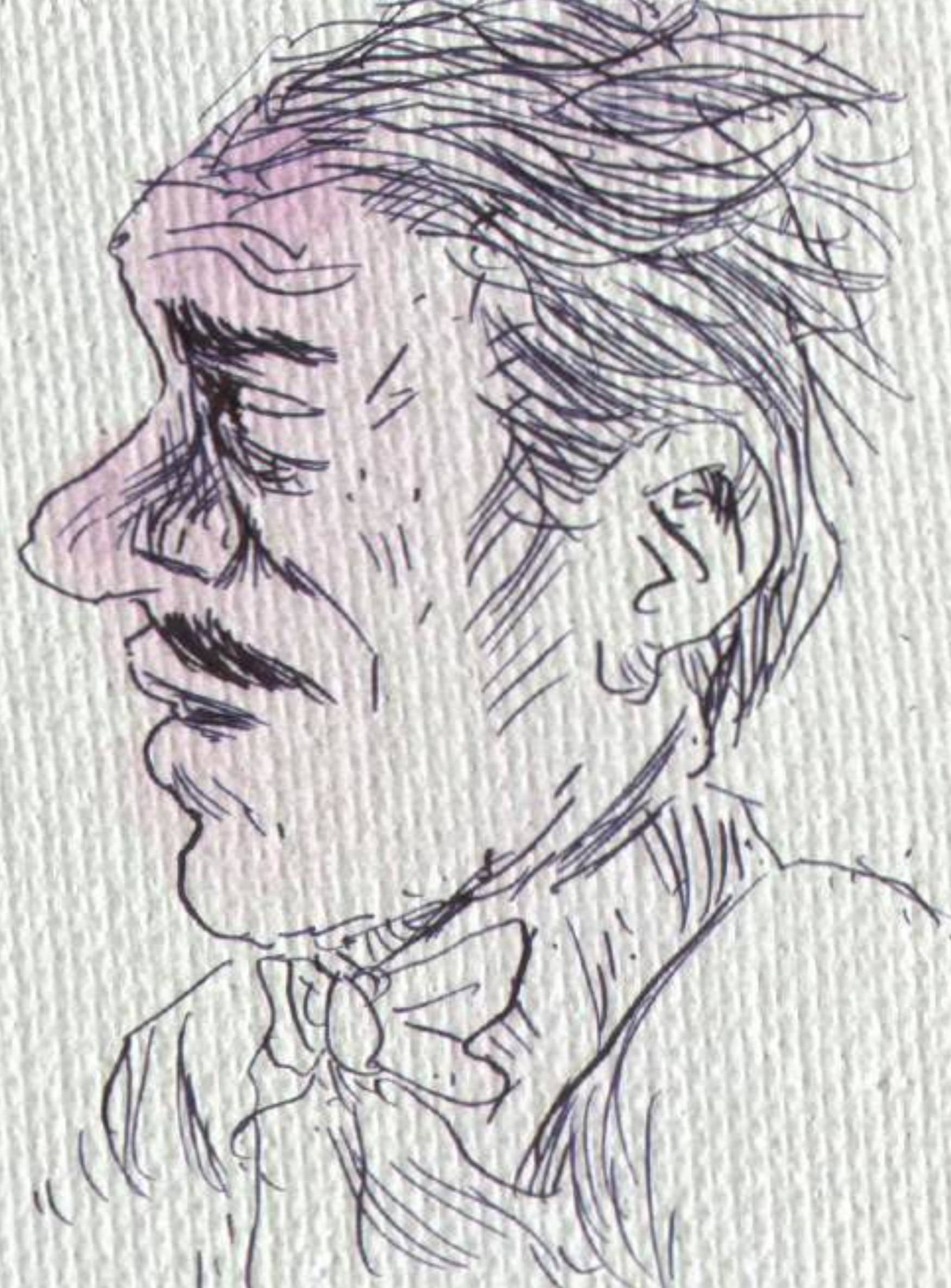
LOUISE VAUTOUR frame restorer, daughter of Régis Vautour, namesake of Louis Anouilh (age 32)



CHIEF INSPECTOR ALOÏS VAILLANT renowned in his field (age 44)



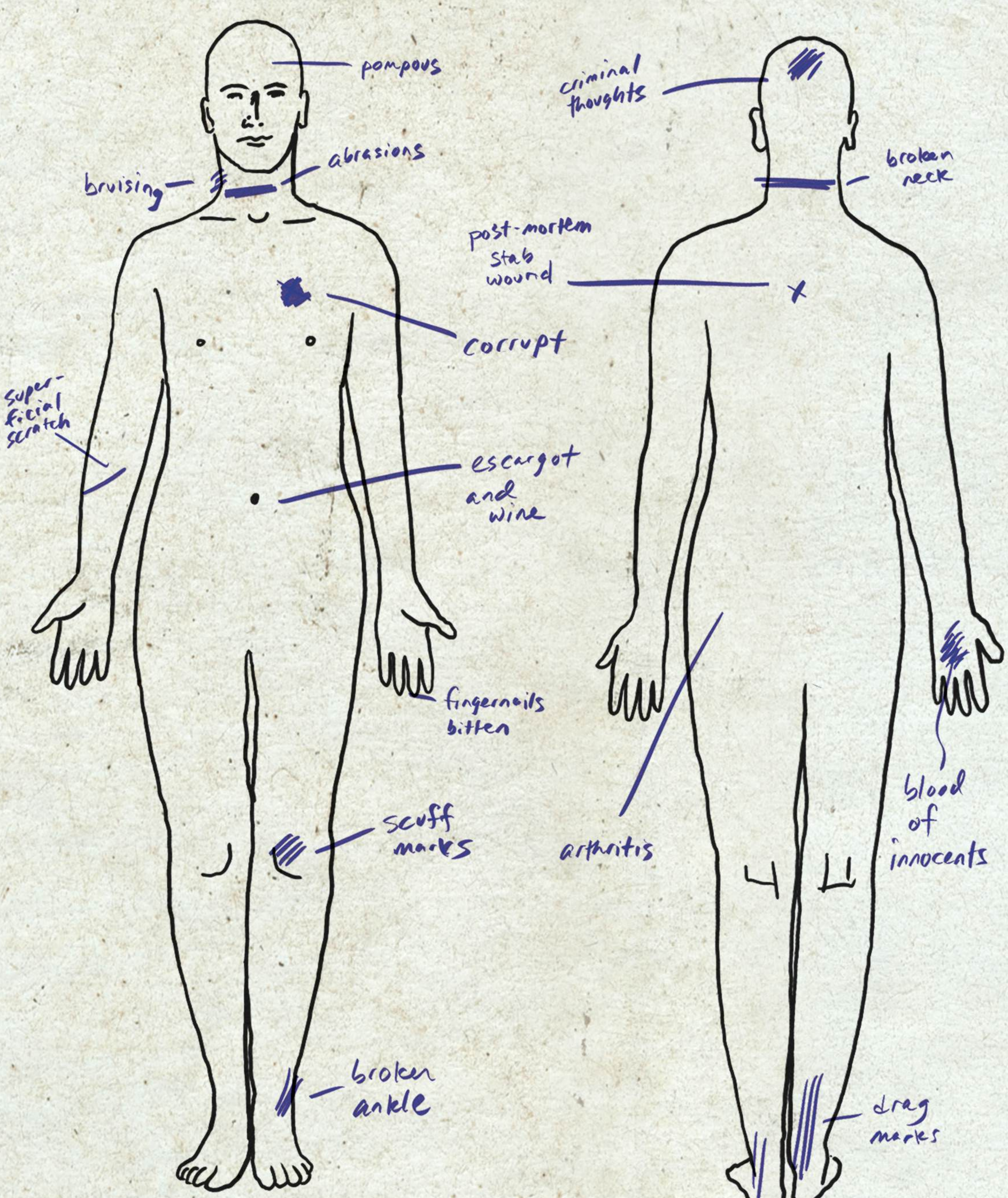
MEREDITH PEARSON bon vivant, great-aunt of Sam (age 70)



RÉGIS VAUTOUR antique dealer, father of Mlle Vautour and cousin of M. Anouilh (age 66)

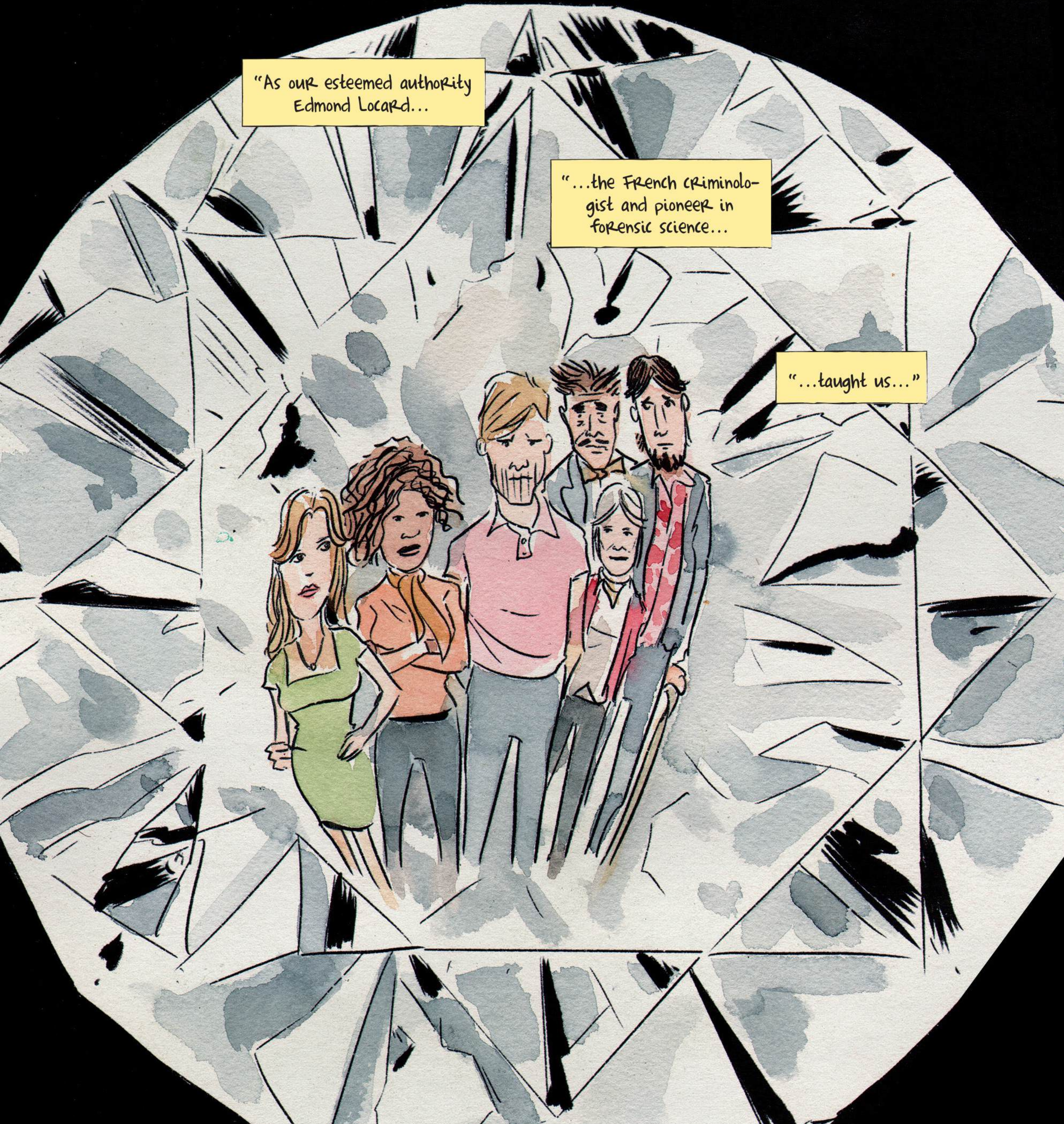
Page Count:	60	Issue Number:	3
Staples:	2	Name:	Margie Kindt
Cost:	$9.99	Examiner:	Matt Kindt

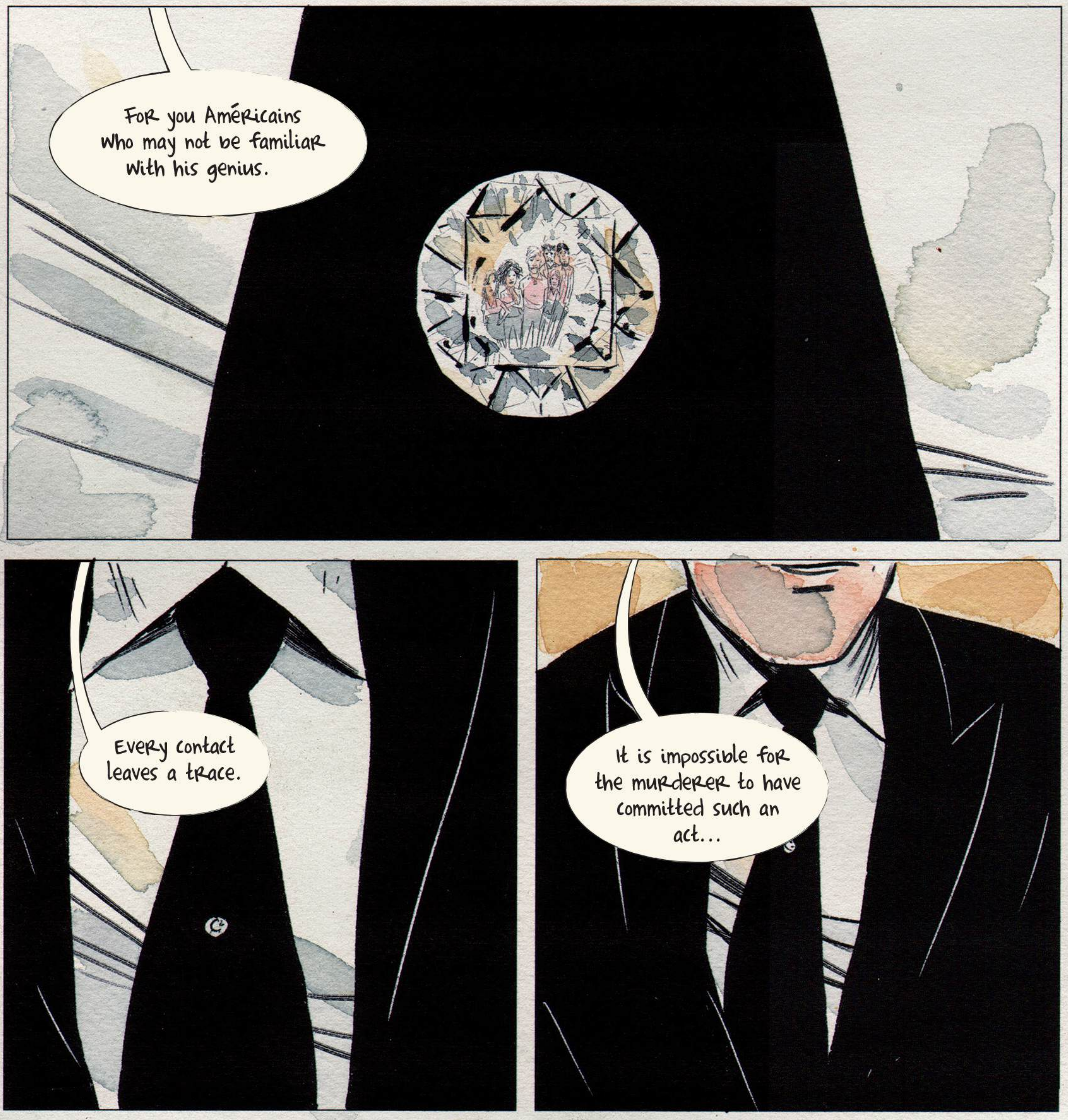
Three

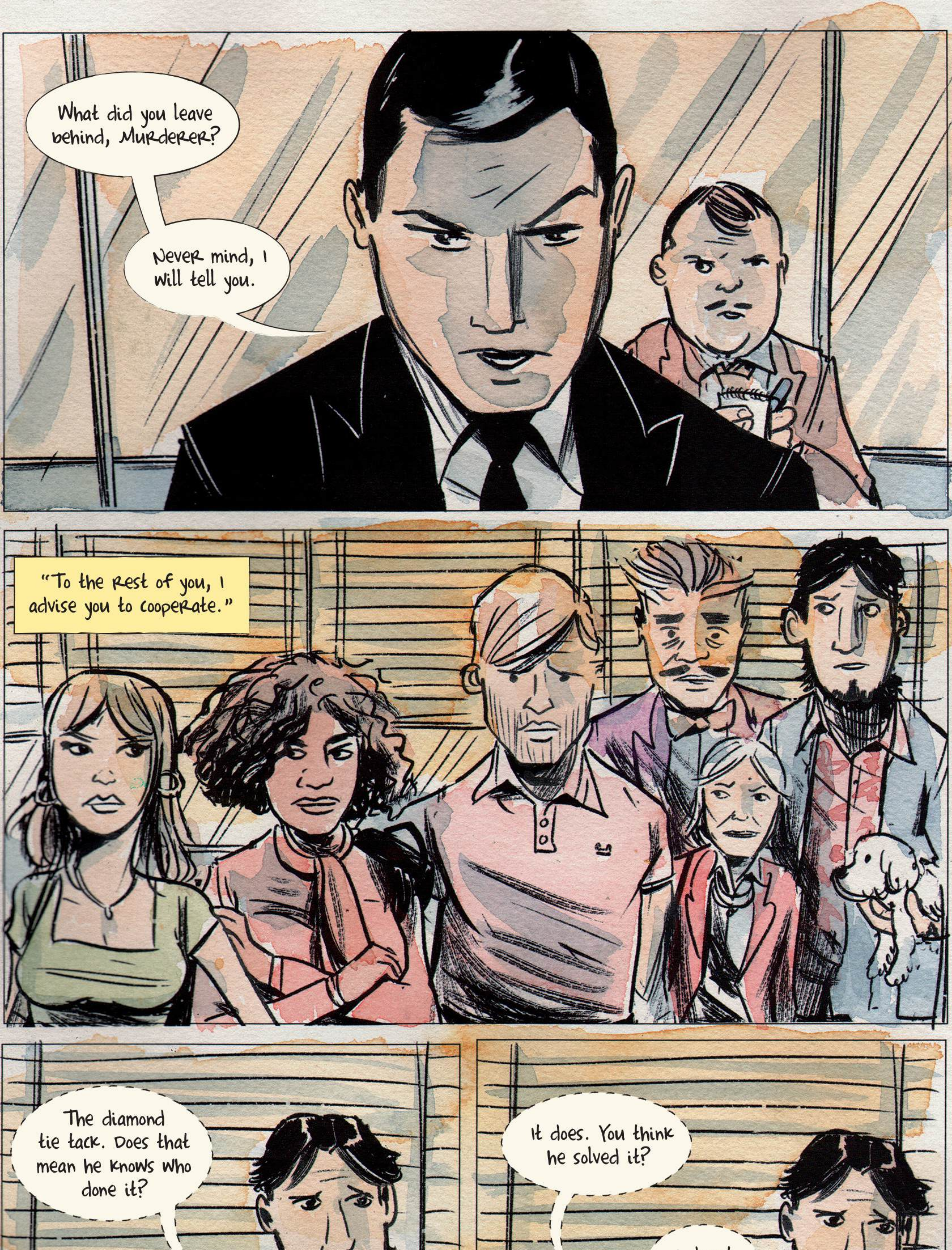

pompous
criminal thoughts
abrasions
bruising
broken neck
post-mortem stab wound
corrupt
super-ficial scratch
escargot and wine
fingernails bitten
blood of innocents
scuff marks
arthritis
broken ankle
drag marks

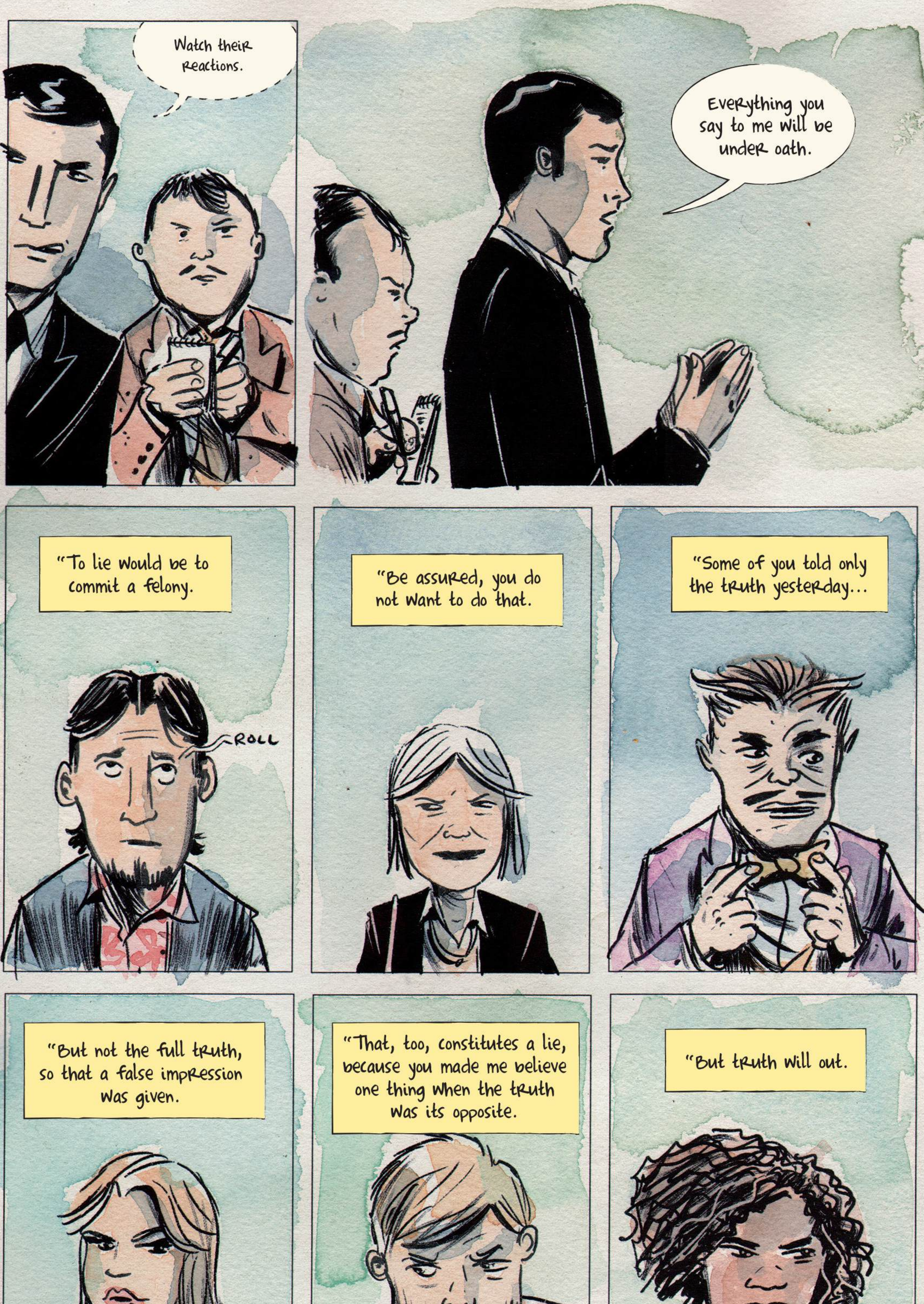
Section: Pathology	**Authorized by: DA Mike Richardson**
Form Title: Autopsy Diagram - Mystery/Fiction/Thriller/Comedy	**Form No.: FIB 001**
Rev.:	**Rev. date. 9/3/24**

Case Closed

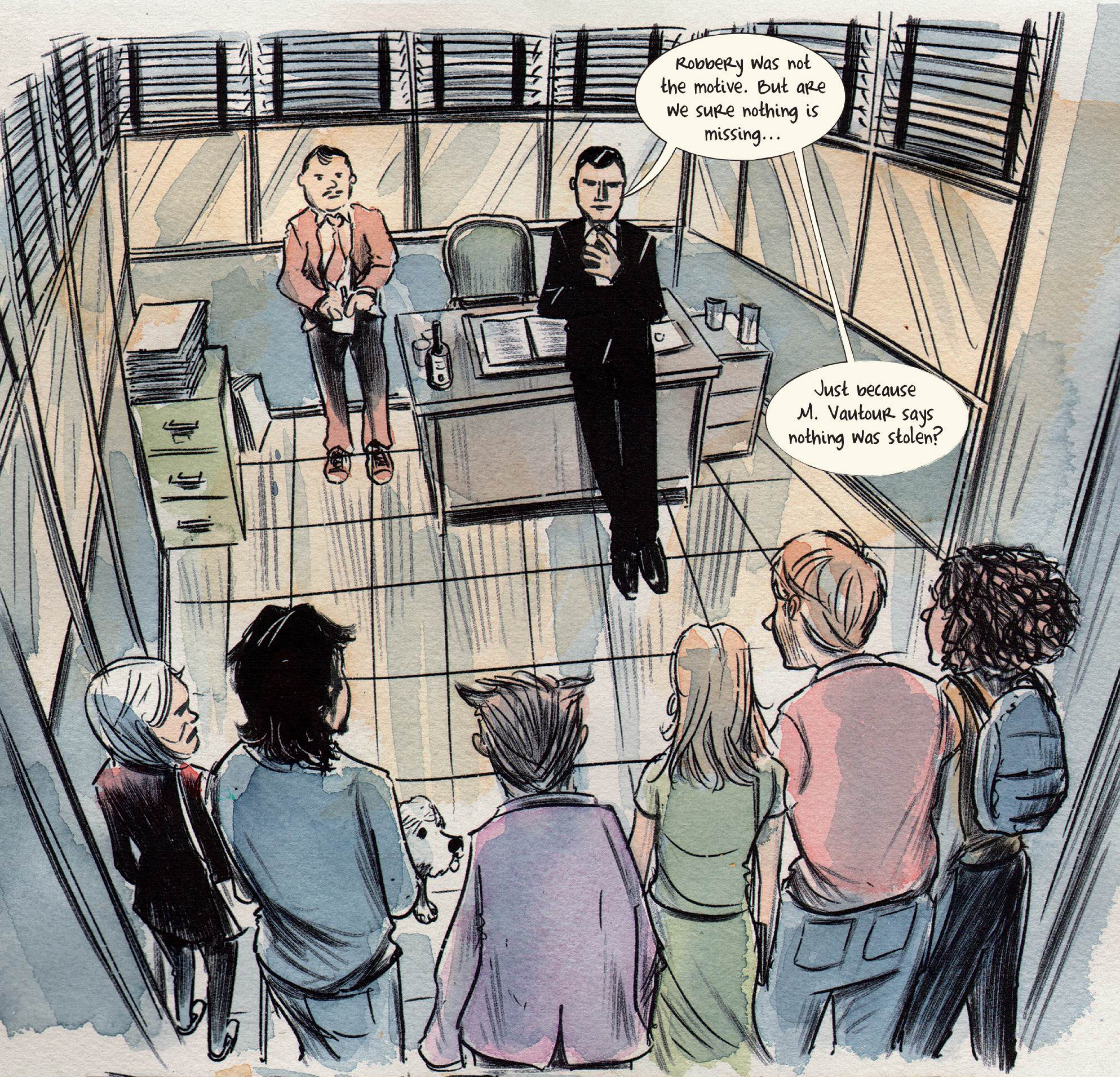

"As our esteemed authority Edmond Locard...
"...the French criminologist and pioneer in forensic science...
"...taught us..."

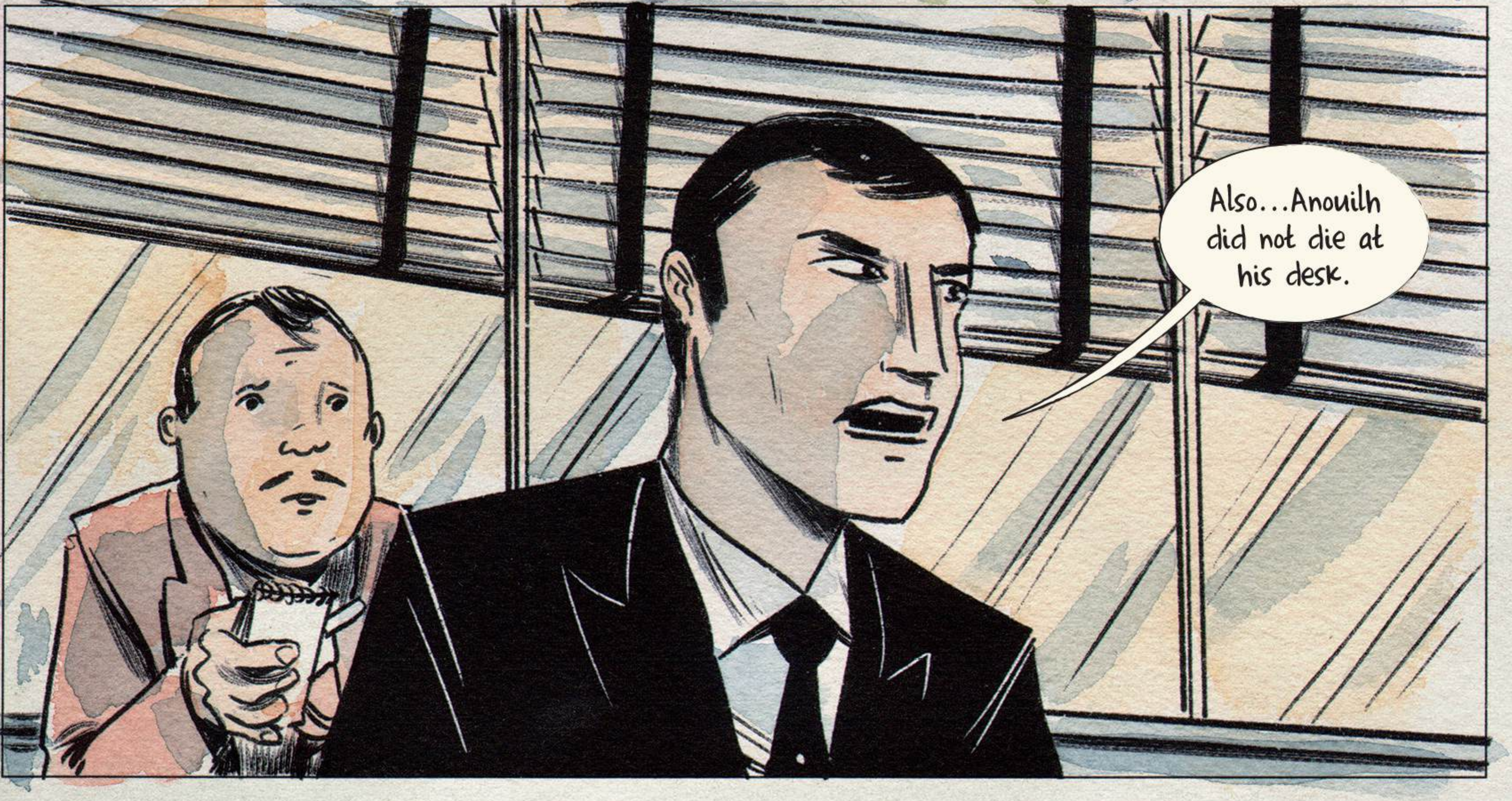

For you Américains who may not be familiar with his genius.
Every contact leaves a trace.
It is impossible for the murderer to have committed such an act…
…Without leaving traces of their presence.


What did you leave behind, Murderer?
Never mind, I will tell you.
"To the rest of you, I advise you to cooperate."
The diamond tie tack. Does that mean he knows who done it?
It does. You think he solved it?
I doubt it.

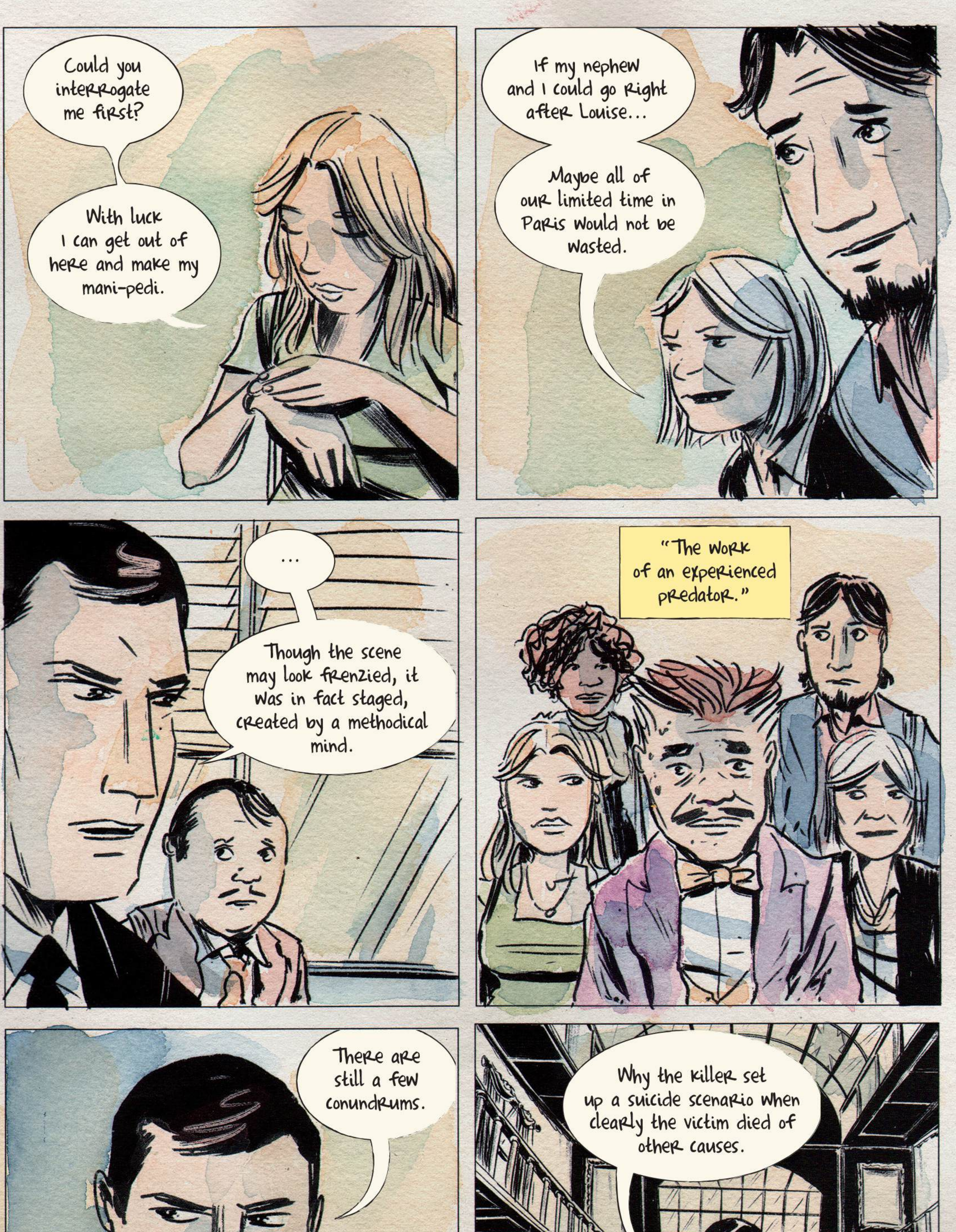

Watch their reactions.
Everything you say to me will be under oath.
"To lie would be to commit a felony.
ROLL
"Be assured, you do not want to do that.
"Some of you told only the truth yesterday...
"But not the full truth, so that a false impression was given.
"That, too, constitutes a lie, because you made me believe one thing when the truth was its opposite.
"But truth will out.

"There will be an arrest.
"Before day's end...
SCRCHH
BITE
"I will have the evidence needed...
"We only await responses to queries...
"...some from halfway around the world...
TUK
MARS EILLE
"...to ensure a conviction."


Robbery was not the motive. But are we sure nothing is missing…
Just because M. Vautour says nothing was stolen?

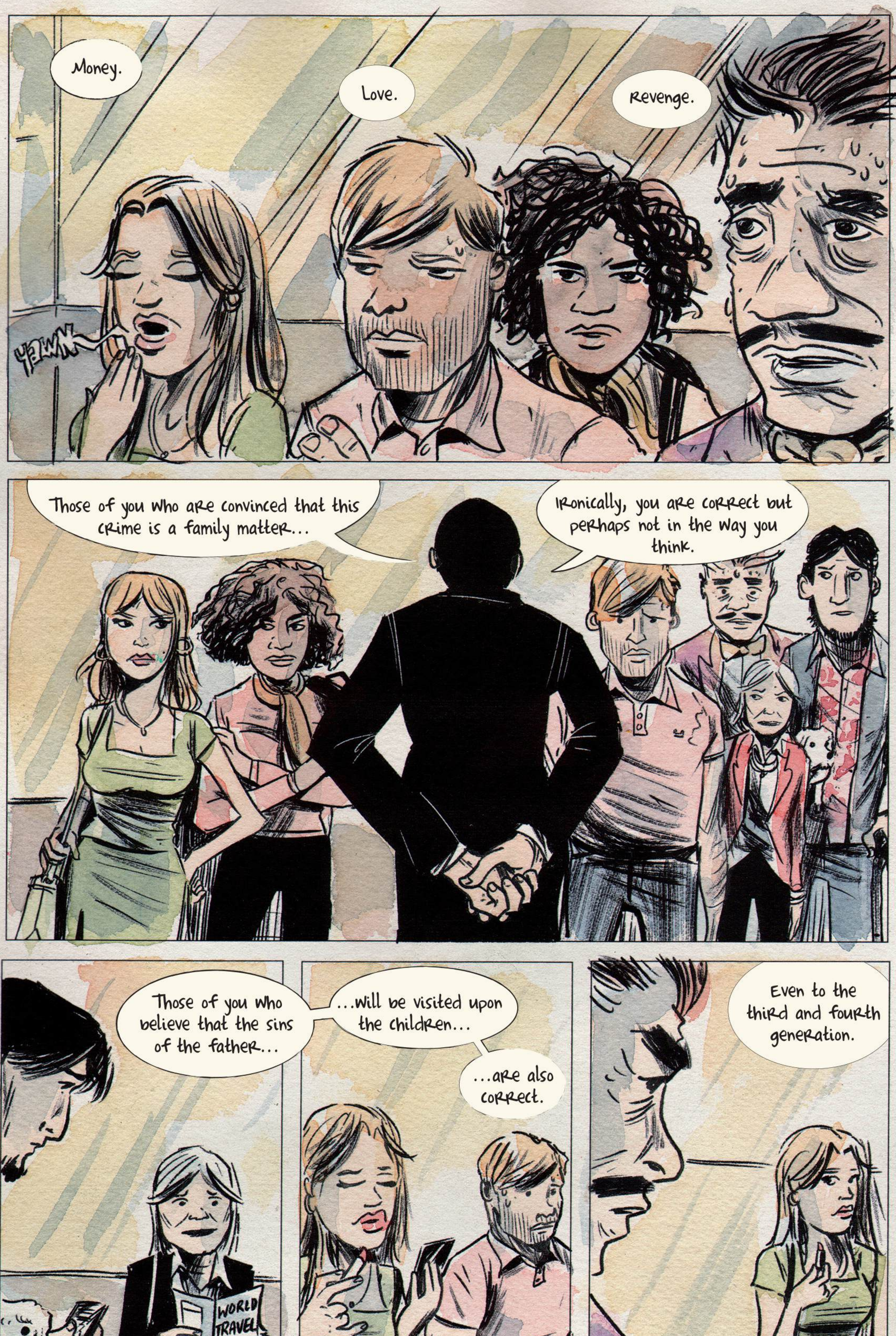

Also…Anouilh did not die at his desk.

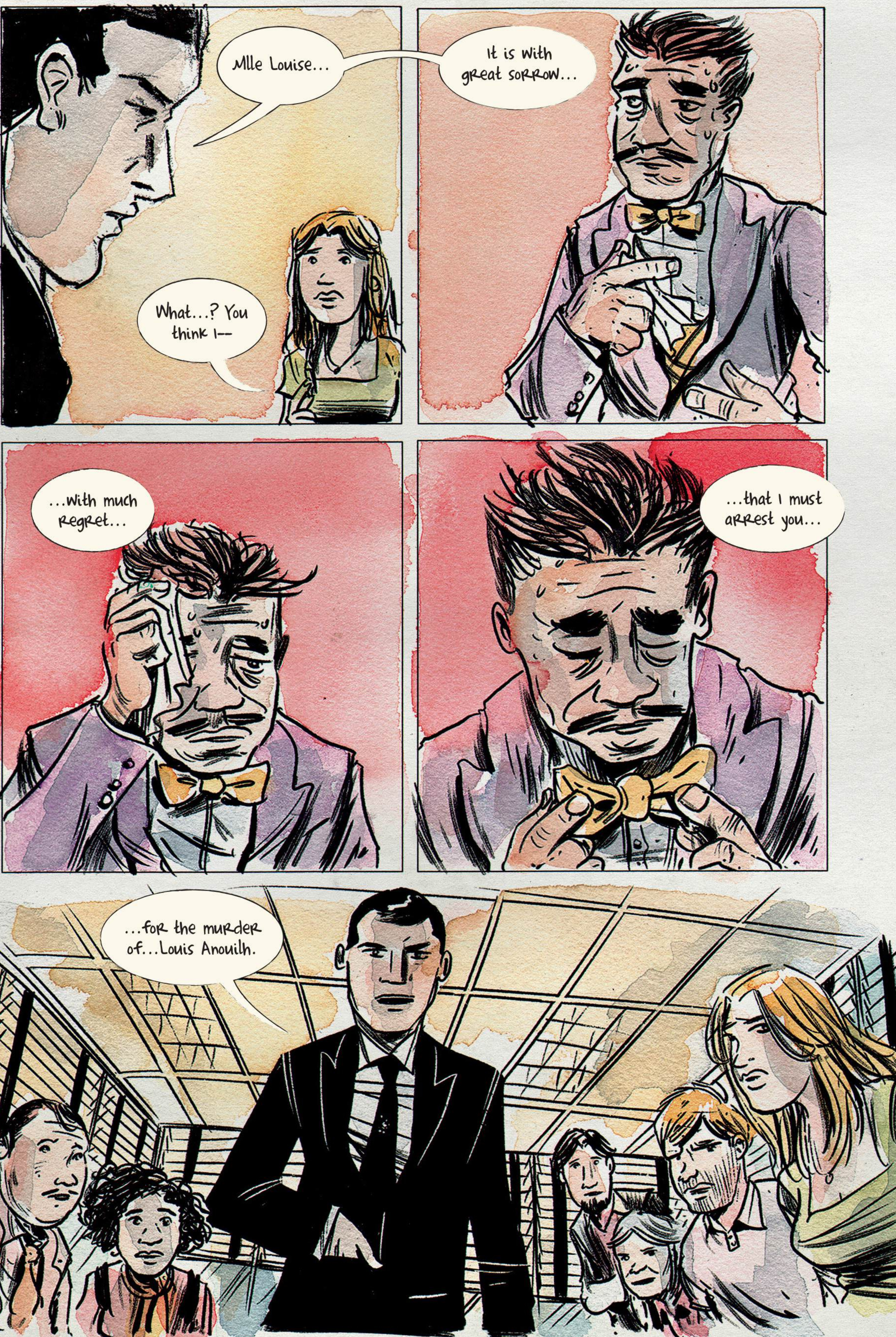
"The autopsy indicated that the broken ribs and arm were caused by a fall from many feet.
"He plunged over the balcony to the floor.
"However, there were injuries not consistent with a fall.
"Both ears bruised.
"Fingers bent back.
"Small slice marks around his nostrils.
"He was already dead when the killer or killers plunged the burnisher into his lifeless body."


Could you interrogate me first?
With luck I can get out of here and make my mani-pedi.
If my nephew and I could go right after Louise...
Maybe all of our limited time in Paris would not be wasted.
...
Though the scene may look frenzied, it was in fact staged, created by a methodical mind.
"The work of an experienced predator."
There are still a few conundrums.
Why the killer set up a suicide scenario when clearly the victim died of other causes.

"Why was there a shoe in the shrubs?
"If the victim intended suicide, why run a glass of warm water and put it with the amphetamines next to his hand?
"If he wanted to gargle, then yes, warm water.
"Why were wood chips on top of the rug after it was moved?
"Why...why? To throw everything including the kitchen sink at us, to confuse the scene. Sound and fury signifying nothing. And everything all at once.
"But the scene of the crime only tells part of the story.

"As always in murder cases, focus on the victim, not the murderer.
"The critical next step was to learn about M. Anouilh and understand what made him tick.
"What had the victim been doing during his last days and whose paths did he cross?
"Once we knew that, we knew not only who had the greatest motive, but also the means and the opportunity."


Money.
Love.
Revenge.
YEINK
Those of you who are convinced that this crime is a family matter...
Ironically, you are correct but perhaps not in the way you think.
Those of you who believe that the sins of the father...
...will be visited upon the children...
...are also correct.
WORLD TRAVEL
Even to the third and fourth generation.

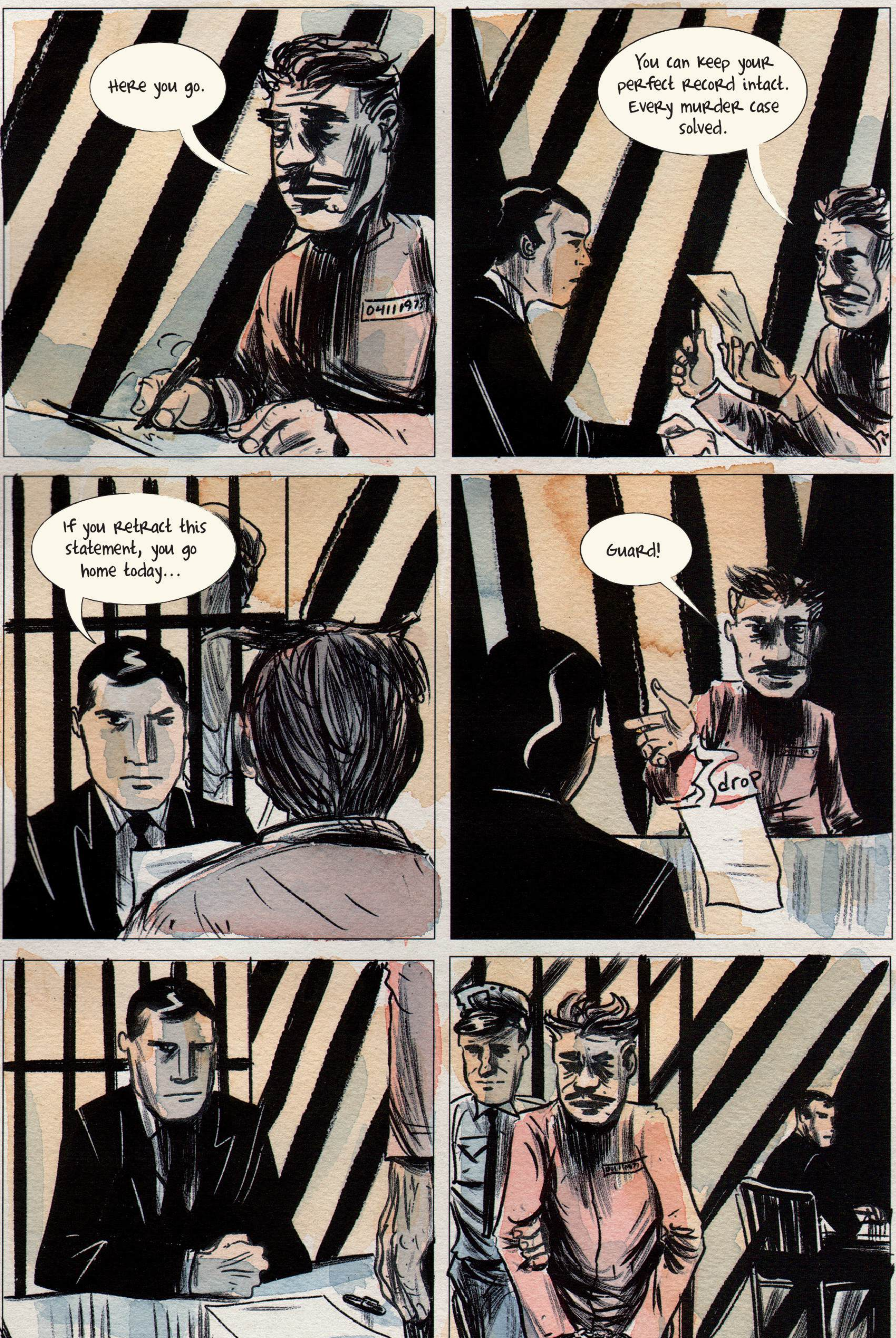

Mlle Louise...
It is with great sorrow...
What...? You think I--
...with much regret...
...that I must arrest you...
...for the murder of...Louis Anouilh.

Wait!
I can't let this happen. I can't take this anymore. I...I confess.
Confess to the murder of my cousin, M. Louis Anouilh.
M. Vautour! Consider carefully what you are doing...
I could not stand by and let him cheat my daughter out of an estate that we all worked so long and hard for as a family.
You may be acting out of love but you make a big mistake. To say you did something you did not do obstructs a case as surely as hiding something that you did do.
Two old men do not have the right to rob a beautiful and deserving young woman of her future.
Father! No jury would convict me on such flimsy evidence!

Lock me up.
God knows I deserve it.
You understand that if you confess, the case is closed.
That's your specialty, isn't it? Closing cases.
You have enough evidence to put me away. So close it.

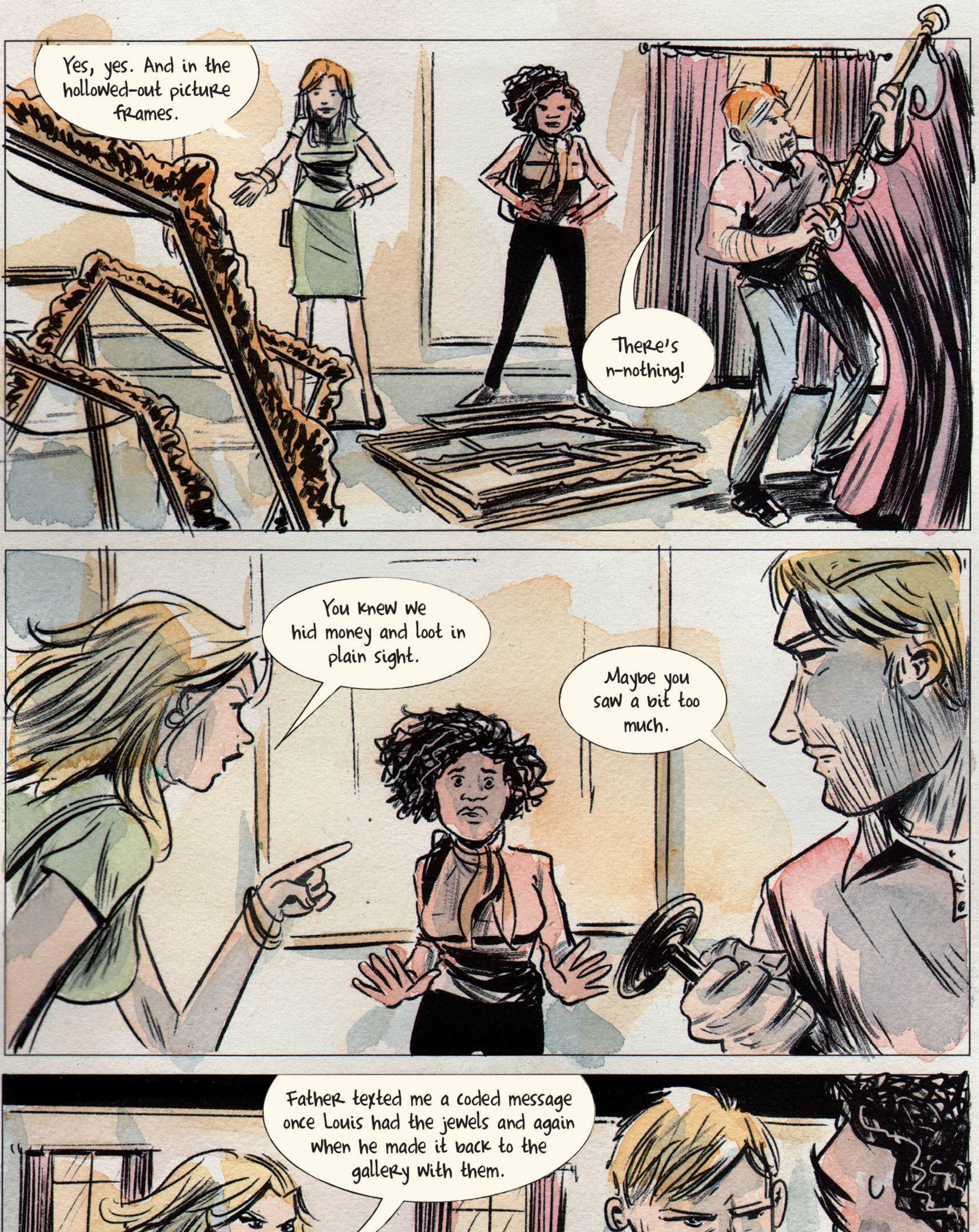
Later

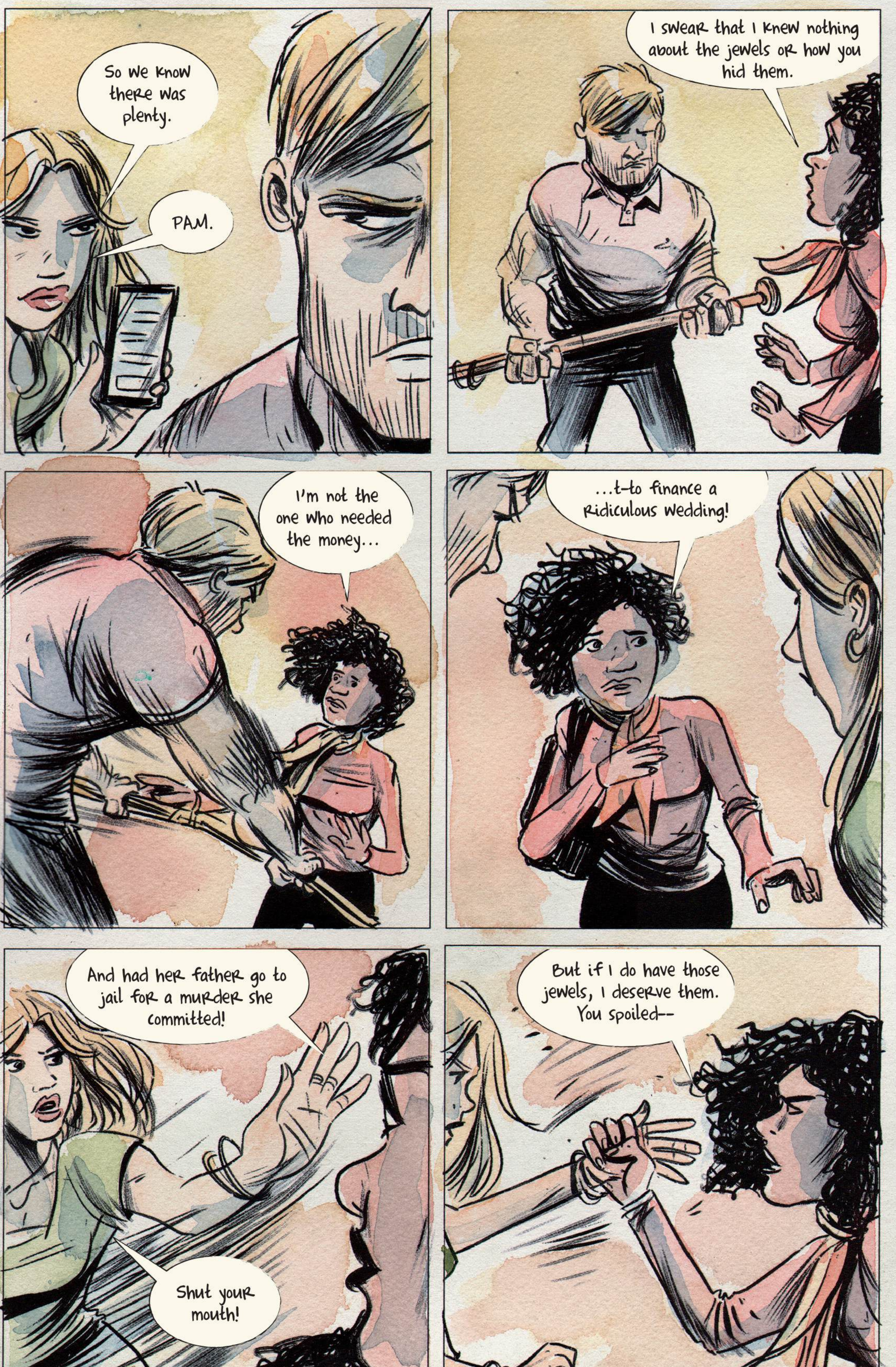
This confession is absurd.
Think again, monsieur, wait a few days.
Are you sure this is the path you should choose?
Of course I must accept your confession as it is voluntary and I believe you to be of sound mind.
But this is wrong. Wholly wrong. And the guilty waltzes away.

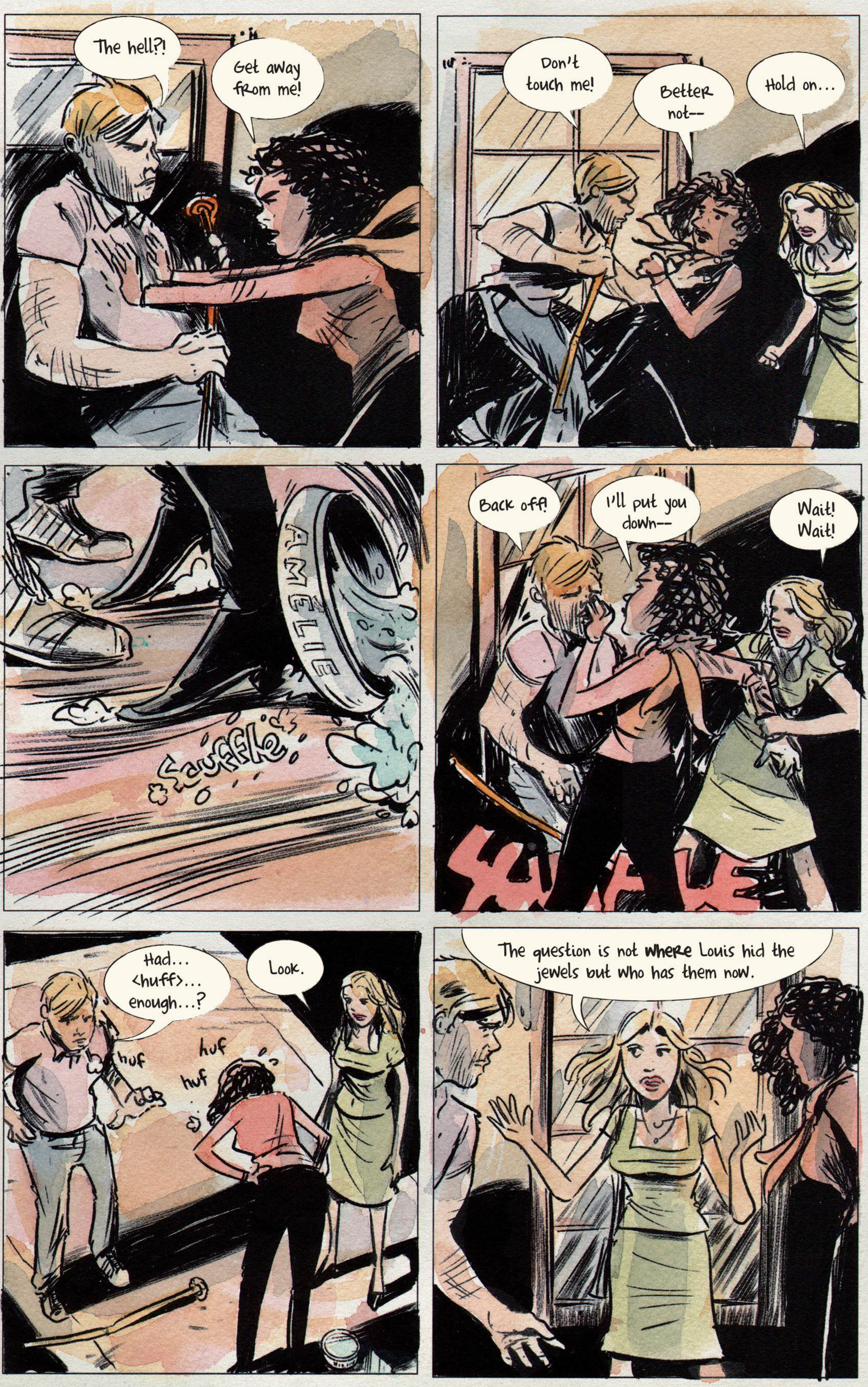

Here you go.
04111975
You can keep your perfect record intact. Every murder case solved.
If you retract this statement, you go home today...
Guard!
drop

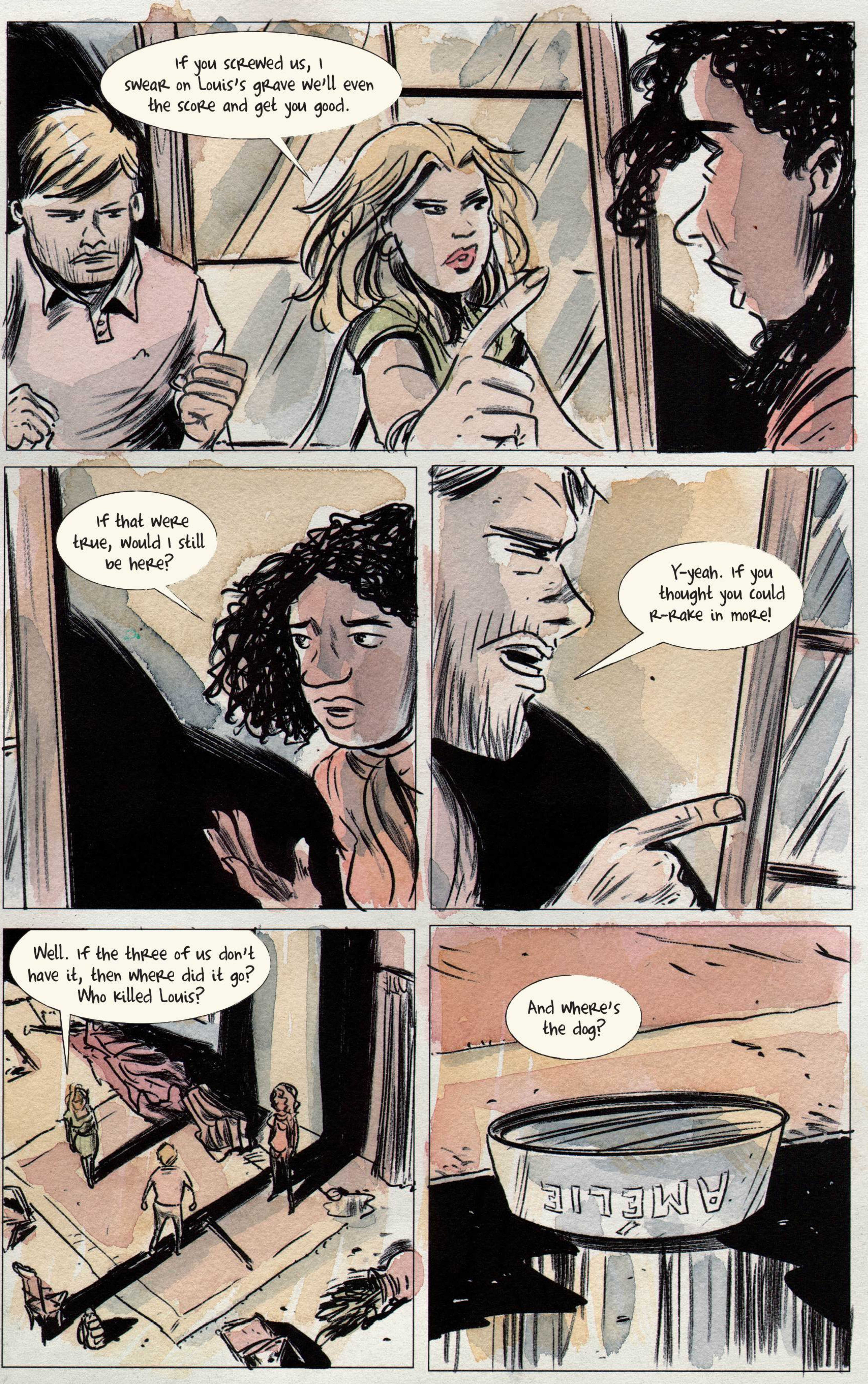
Later

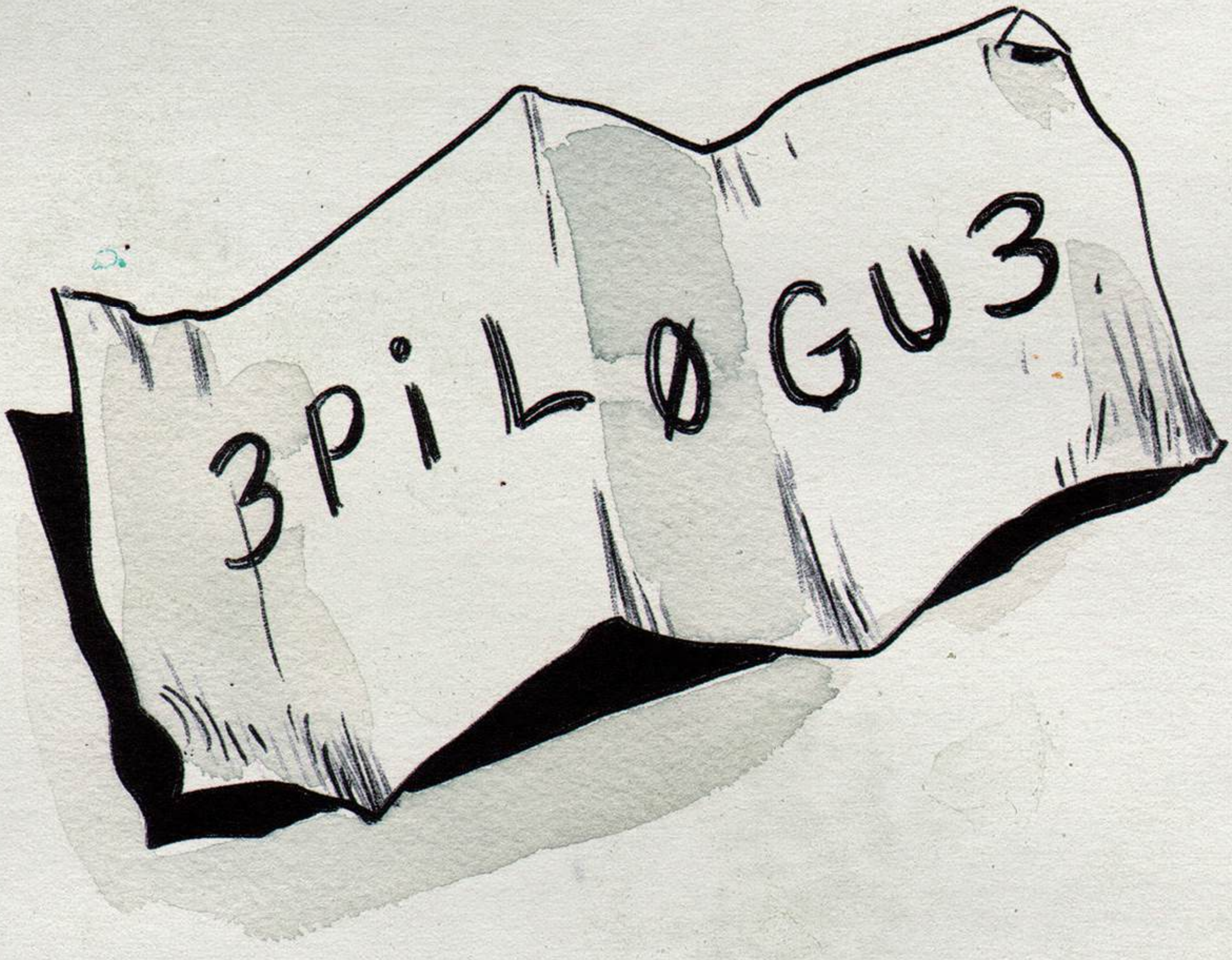
We need to be sure to check all of the safes.
Don't be ridiculous. We already looked, and besides, no one is dumb enough... except maybe you...to store jewels or cash in a safe.
That would be the f-first thing a robber would do, P-Pam, force you to turn over the combination.
Did you check the curtain r-rods?

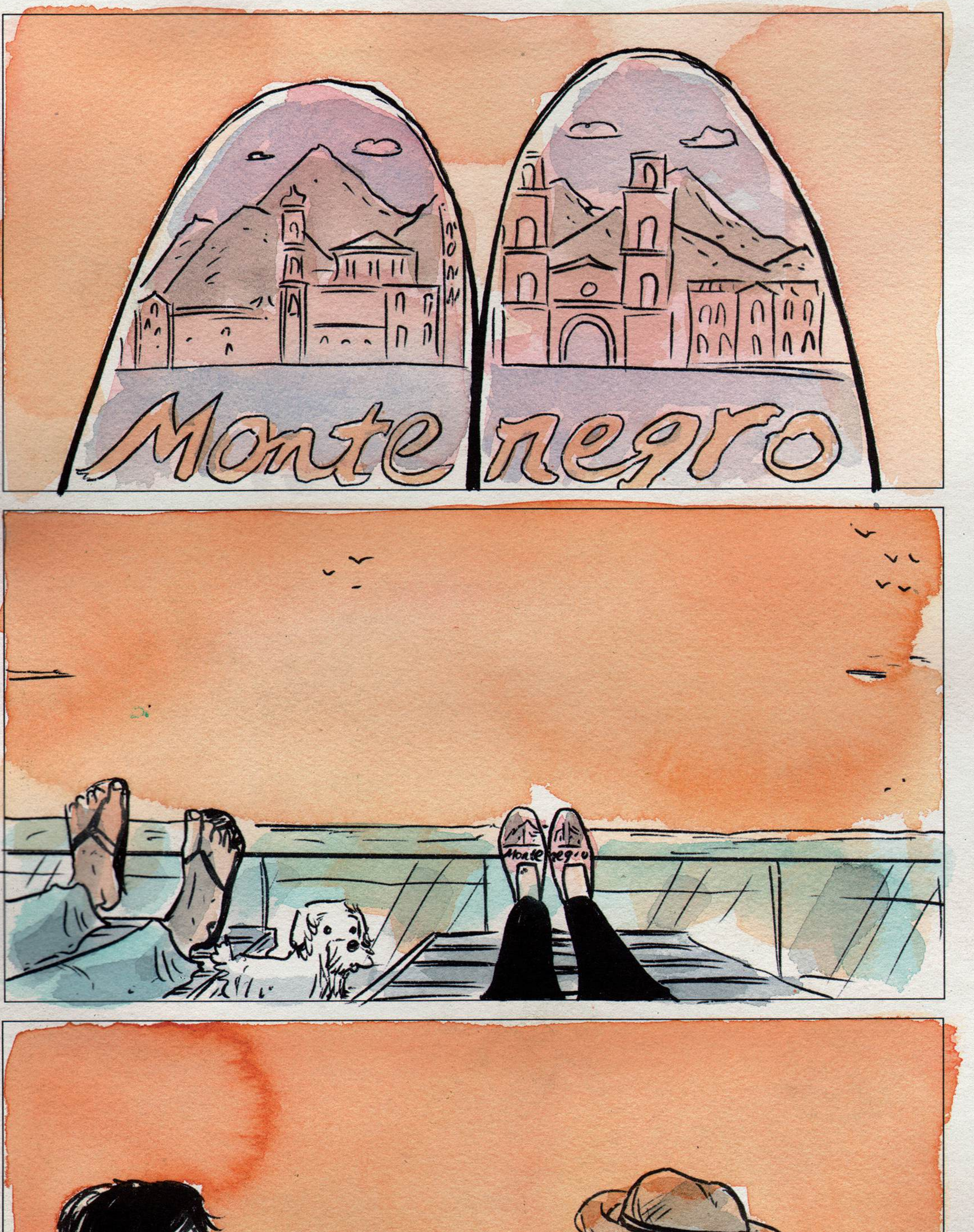

Yes, yes. And in the hollowed-out picture frames.
There's n-nothing!
You knew we hid money and loot in plain sight.
Maybe you saw a bit too much.
Father texted me a coded message once Louis had the jewels and again when he made it back to the gallery with them.
Louis told Dad that he found the whole cache in the chairs and that we would be surprised at the pile...

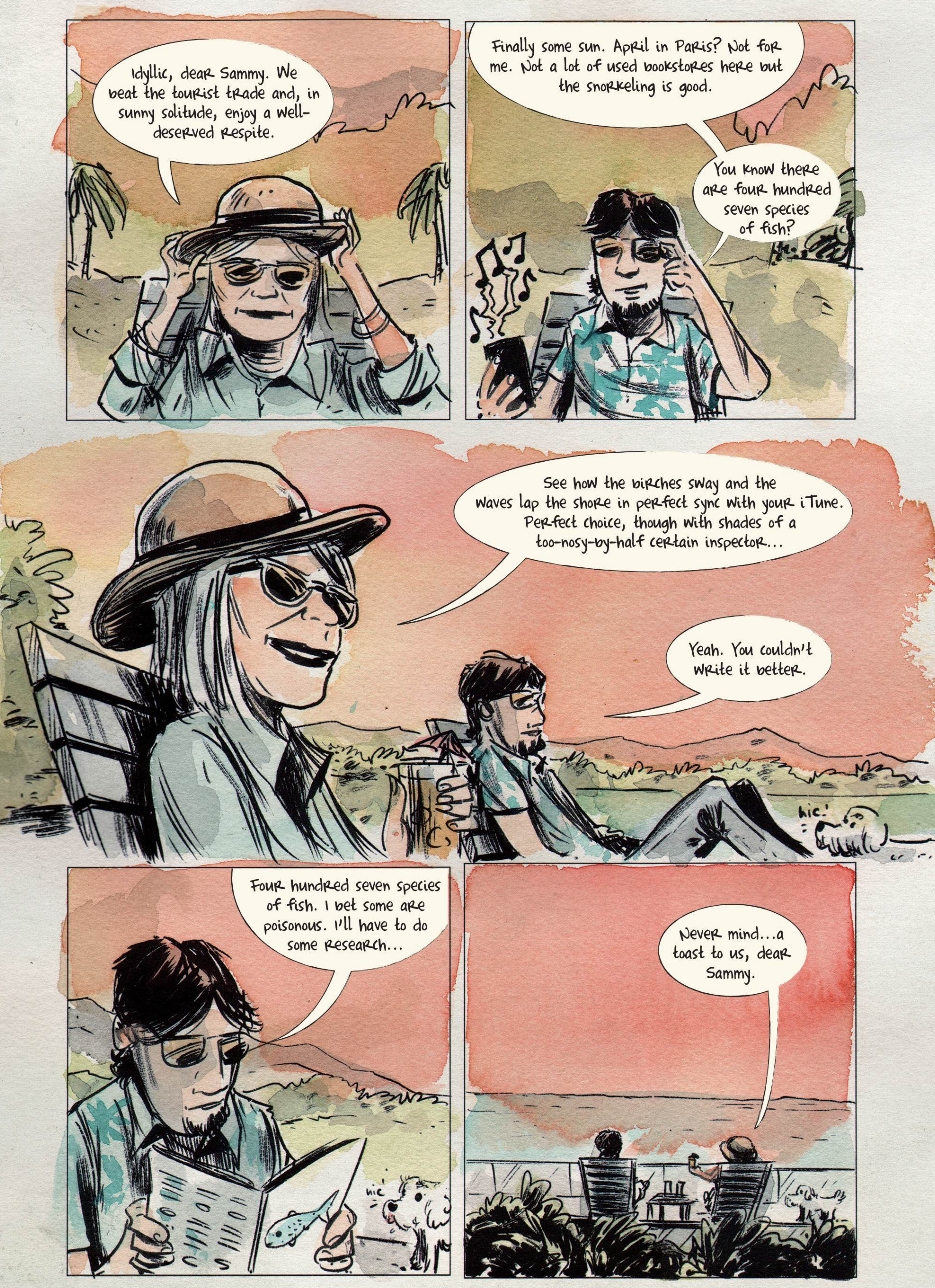

So we know there was plenty.
PAM.
I swear that I knew nothing about the jewels or how you hid them.
I'm not the one who needed the money...
...t-to finance a ridiculous wedding!
And had her father go to jail for a murder she committed!
Shut your mouth!
But if I do have those jewels, I deserve them. You spoiled--

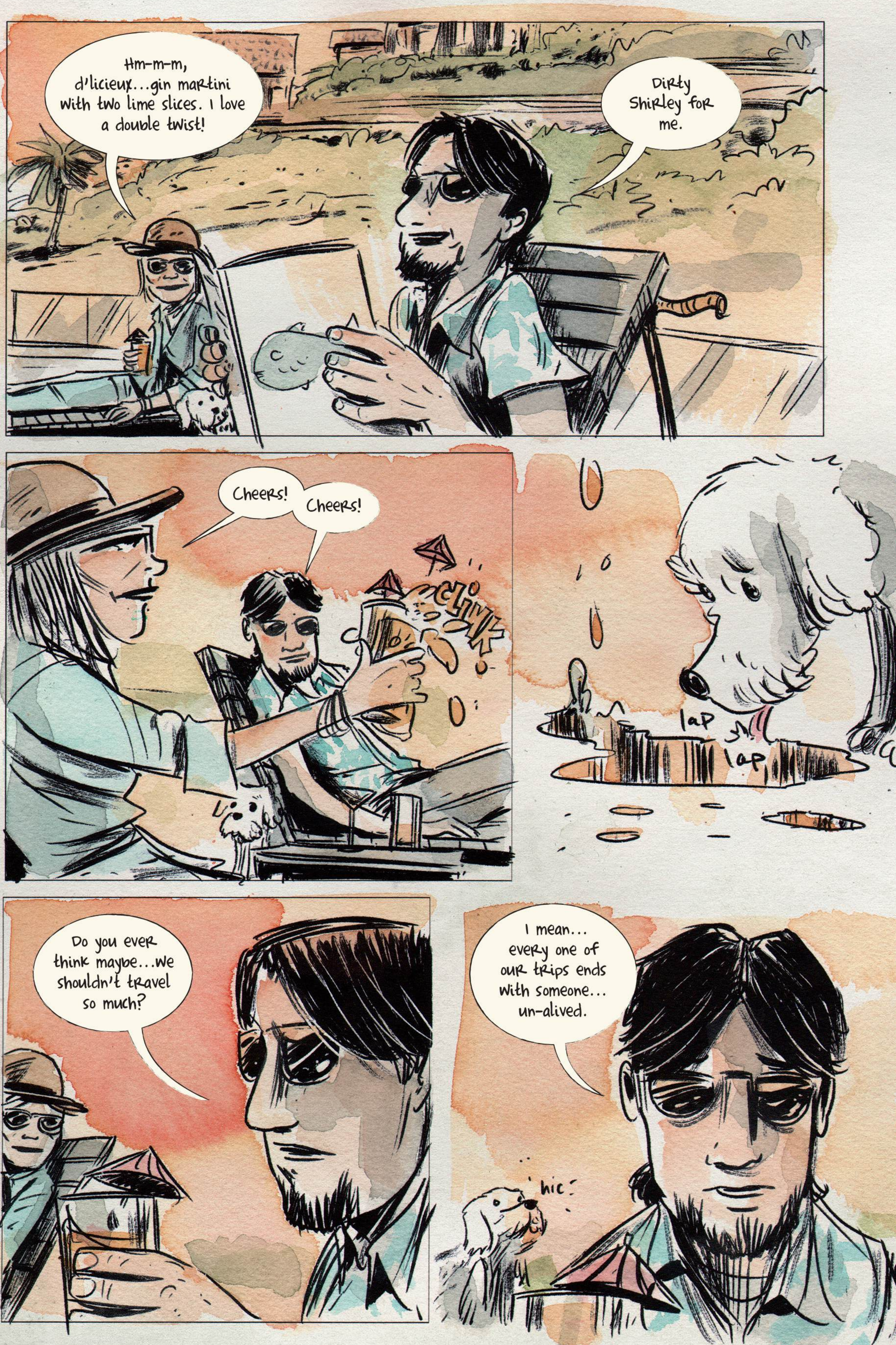

The hell?!
Get away from me!
Don't touch me!
Better not--
Hold on...
AMELIE
Scuffle
Back off!
I'll put you down--
Wait! Wait!
SCUFFLE
Had... <huff>... enough...?
Look.
huf
huf
huf
The question is not **where** Louis hid the jewels but who has them now.


If you screwed us, I swear on Louis's grave we'll even the score and get you good.
If that were true, would I still be here?
Y-yeah. If you thought you could r-rake in more!
Well. If the three of us don't have it, then where did it go? Who killed Louis?
And where's the dog?
AMELIE

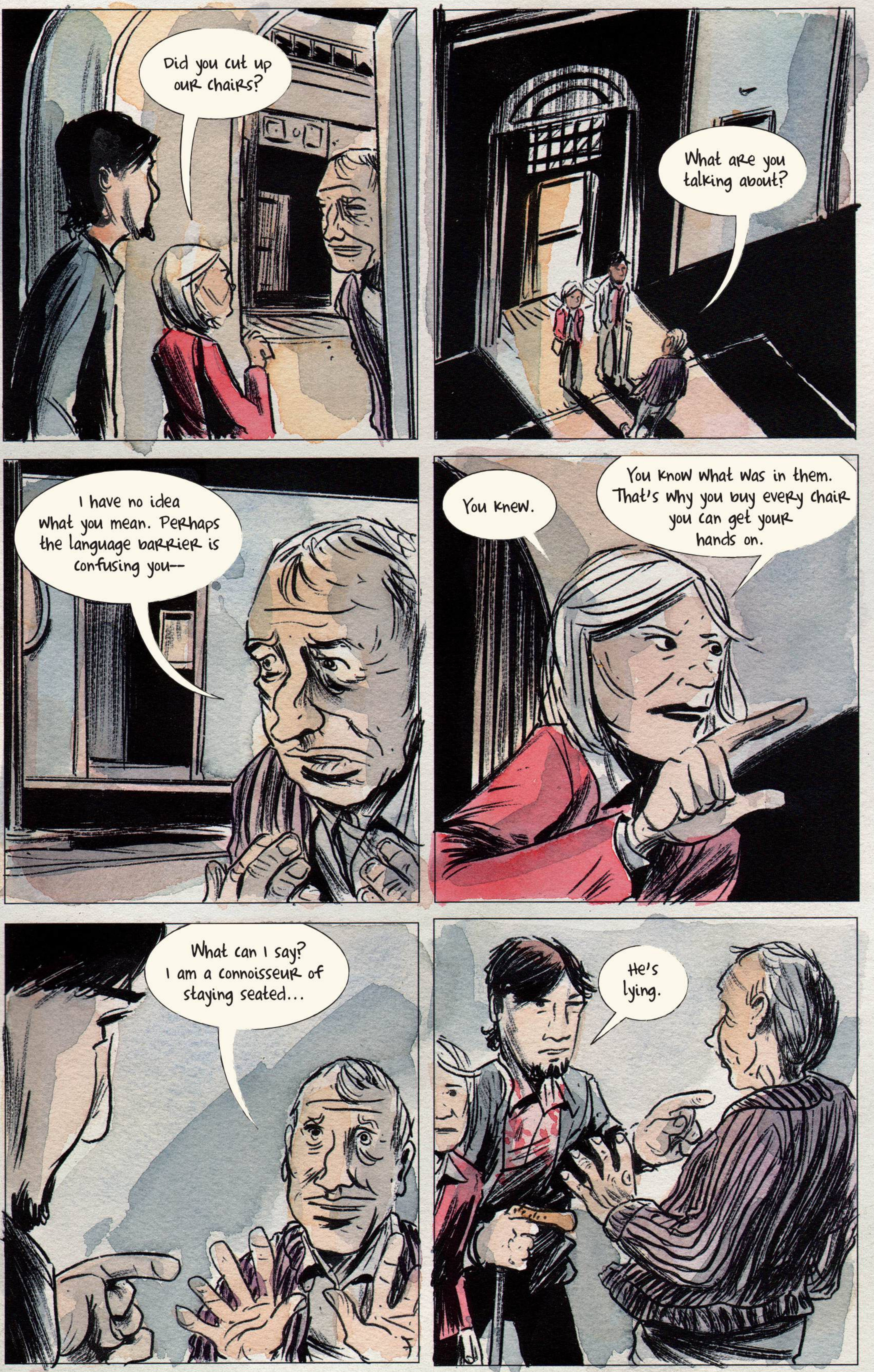

3PiLØGU3

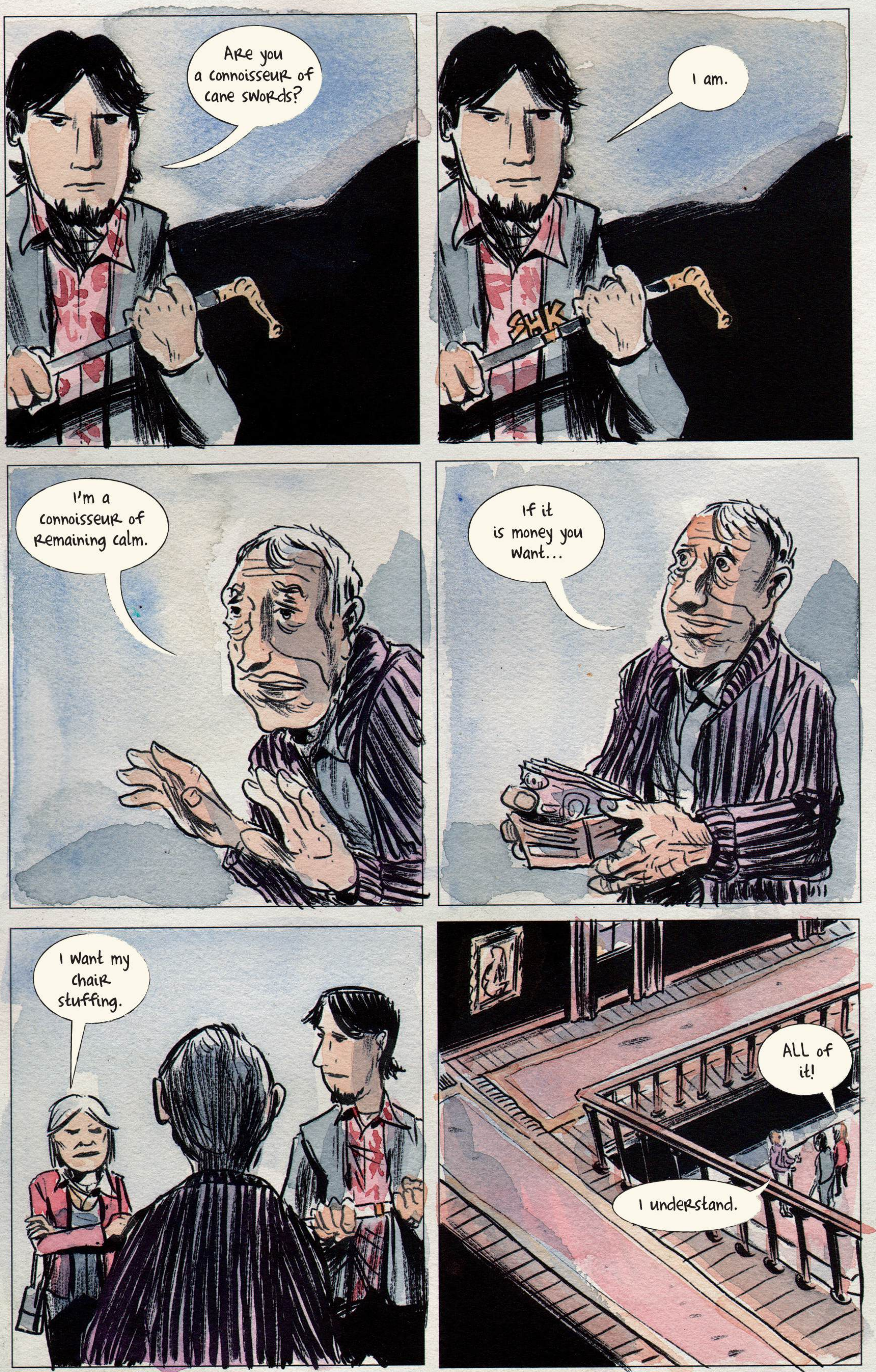

Monte negro
Monte negro

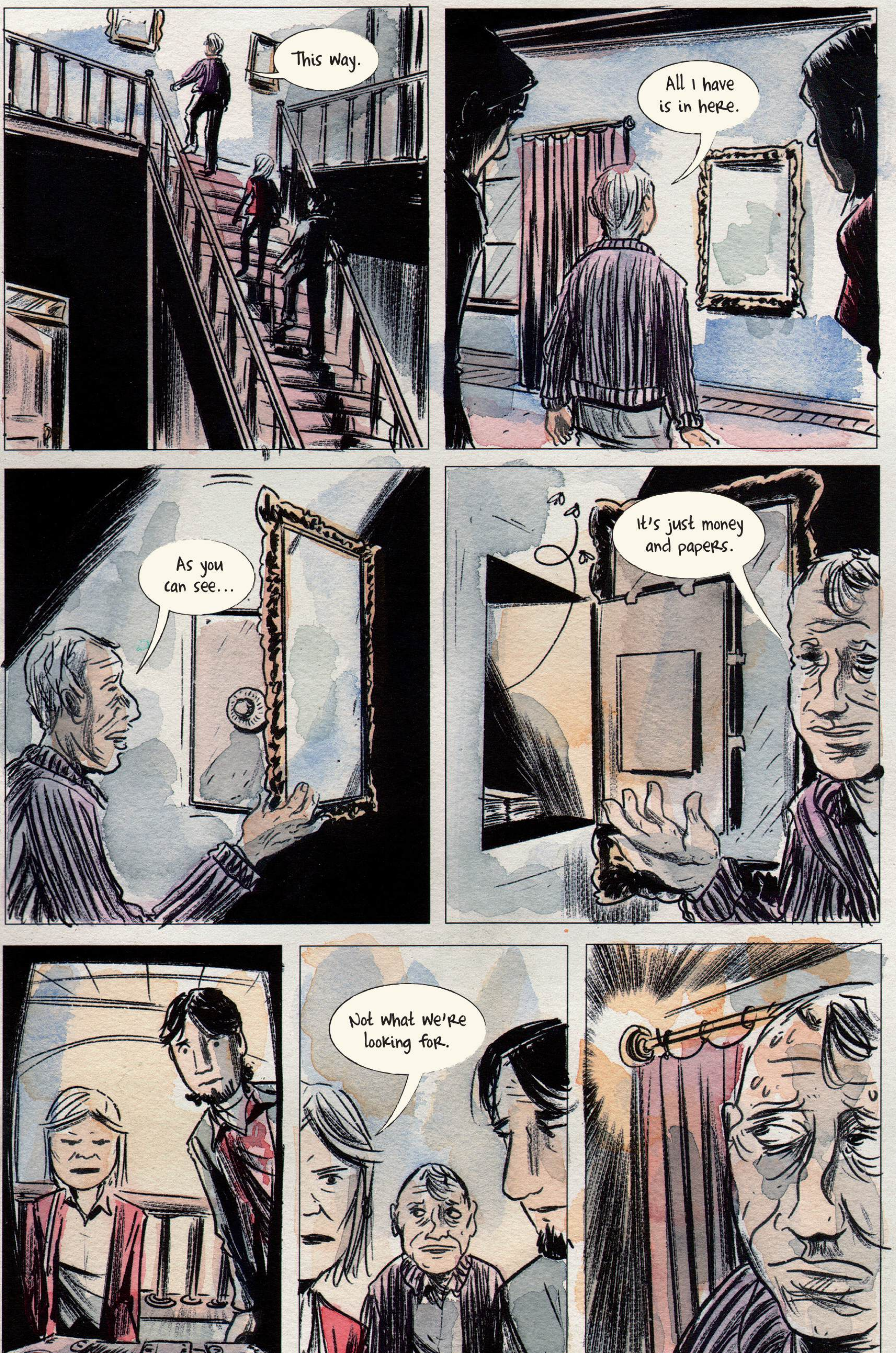

Idyllic, dear Sammy. We beat the tourist trade and, in sunny solitude, enjoy a well-deserved respite.
Finally some sun. April in Paris? Not for me. Not a lot of used bookstores here but the snorkeling is good.
You know there are four hundred seven species of fish?
See how the birches sway and the waves lap the shore in perfect sync with your iTune. Perfect choice, though with shades of a too-nosy-by-half certain inspector…
Yeah. You couldn't write it better.
hic!
Four hundred seven species of fish. I bet some are poisonous. I'll have to do some research…
hic
Never mind…a toast to us, dear Sammy.

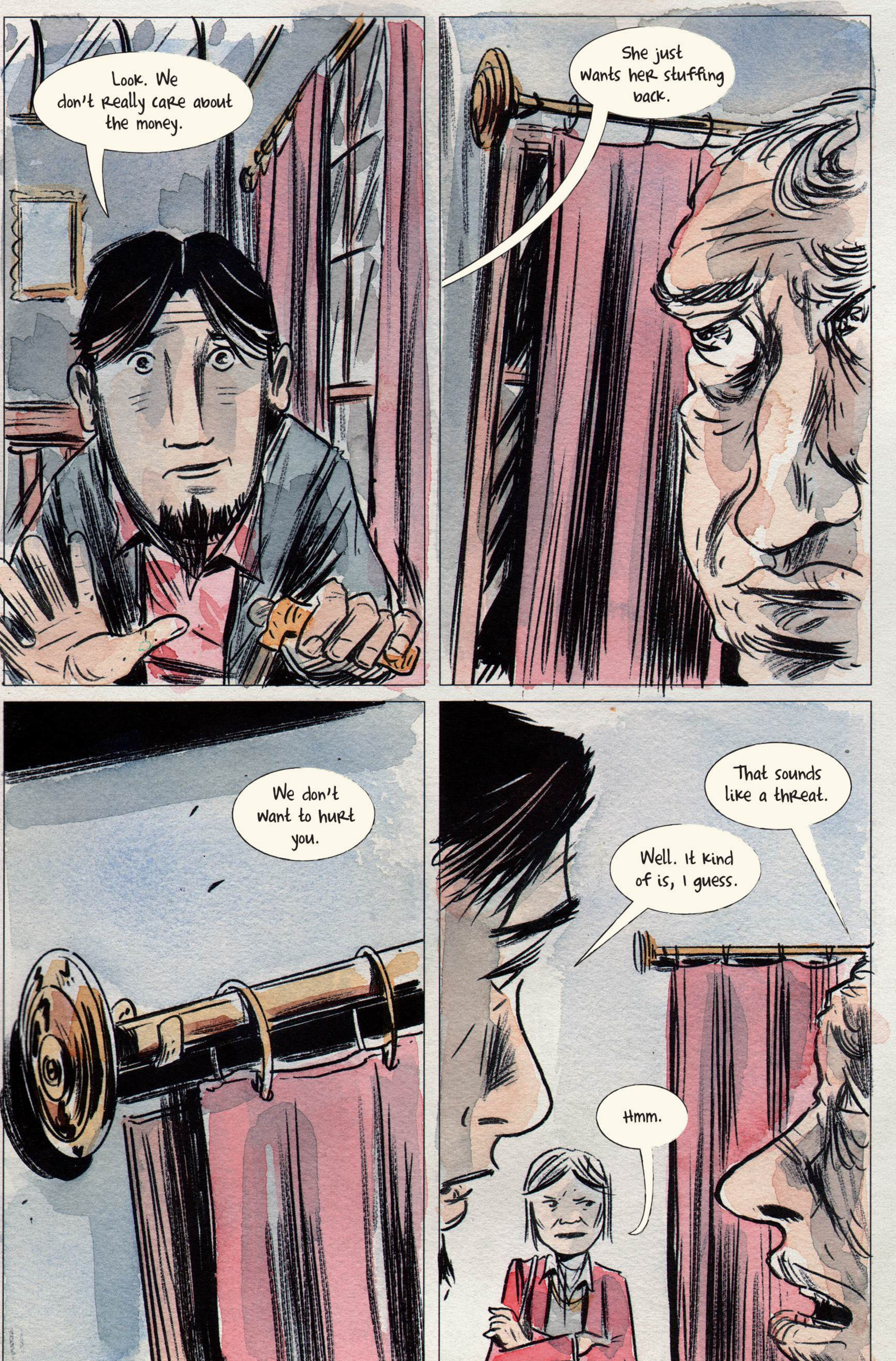

Hm-m-m, d'licieux…gin martini with two lime slices. I love a double twist!
Dirty Shirley for me.
Cheers!
Cheers!
CLINK
lap
lap
Do you ever think maybe…we shouldn't travel so much?
I mean… every one of our trips ends with someone… un-alived.
hic

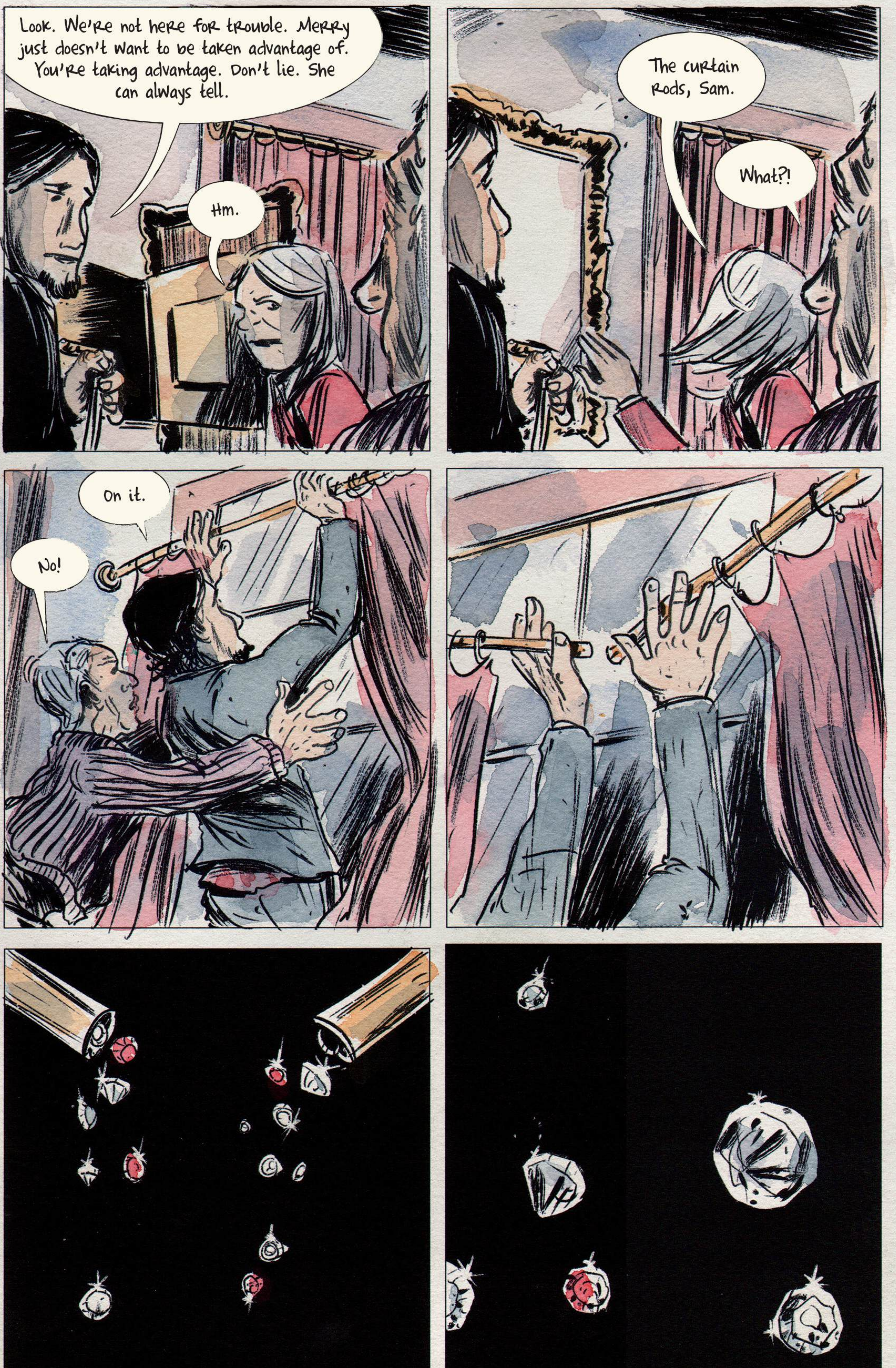
3 Days Ago

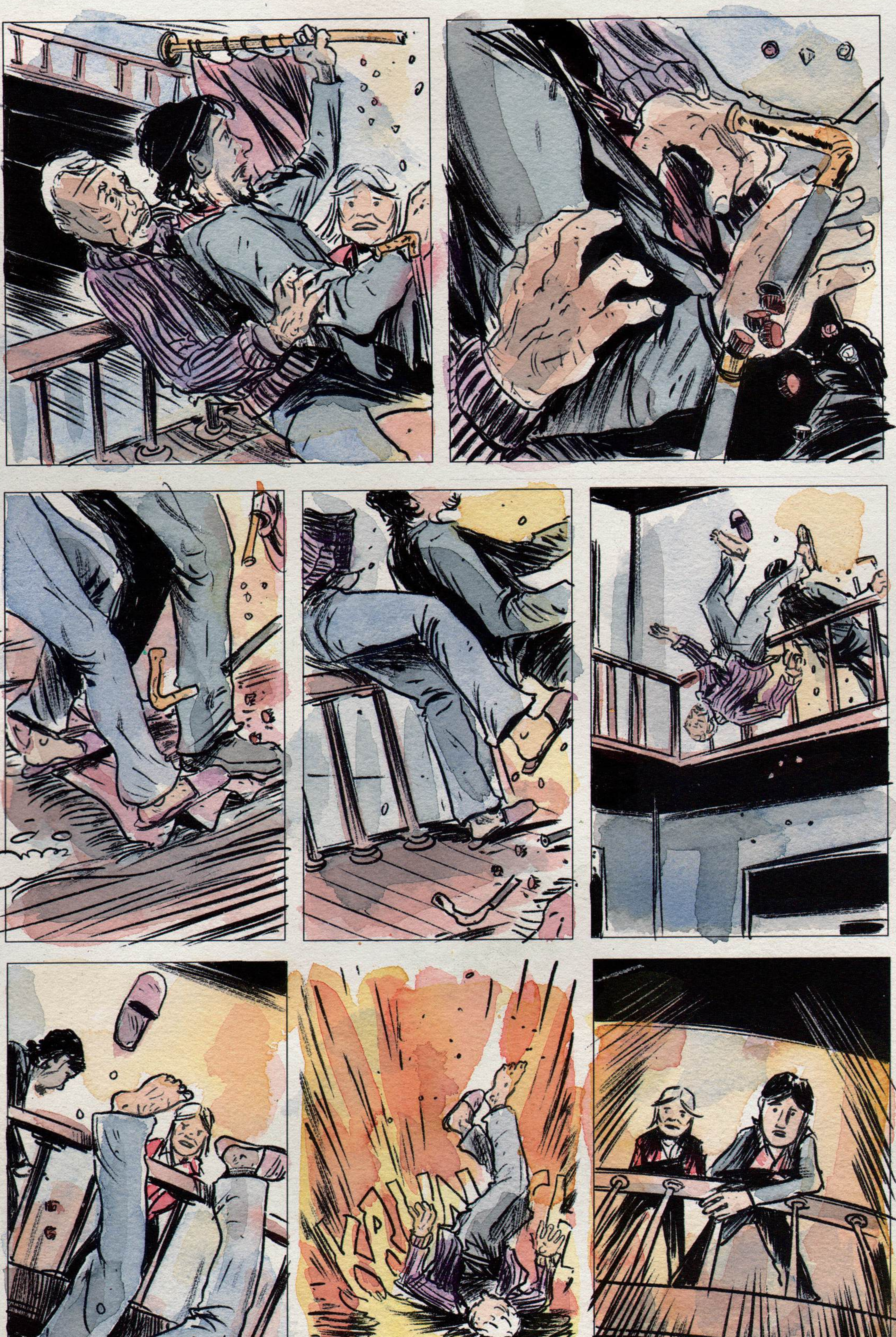

Did you cut up our chairs?
What are you talking about?
I have no idea what you mean. Perhaps the language barrier is confusing you--
You knew.
You know what was in them. That's why you buy every chair you can get your hands on.
What can I say? I am a connoisseur of staying seated...
He's lying.


Are you a connoisseur of cane swords?
SHK
I am.
I'm a connoisseur of remaining calm.
If it is money you want...
I want my chair stuffing.
ALL of it!
I understand.

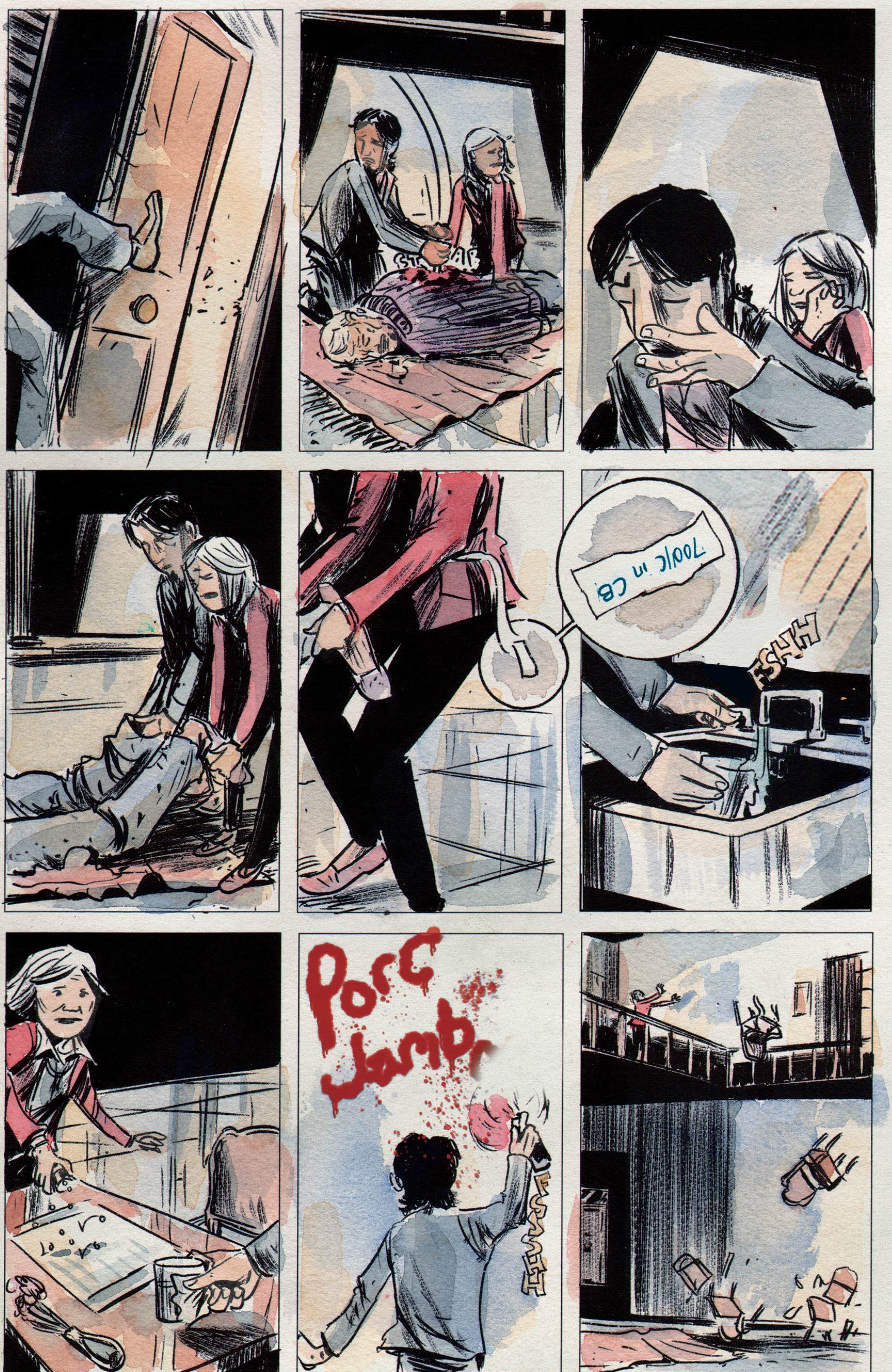

This way.
All I have is in here.
As you can see...
It's just money and papers.
Not what we're looking for.

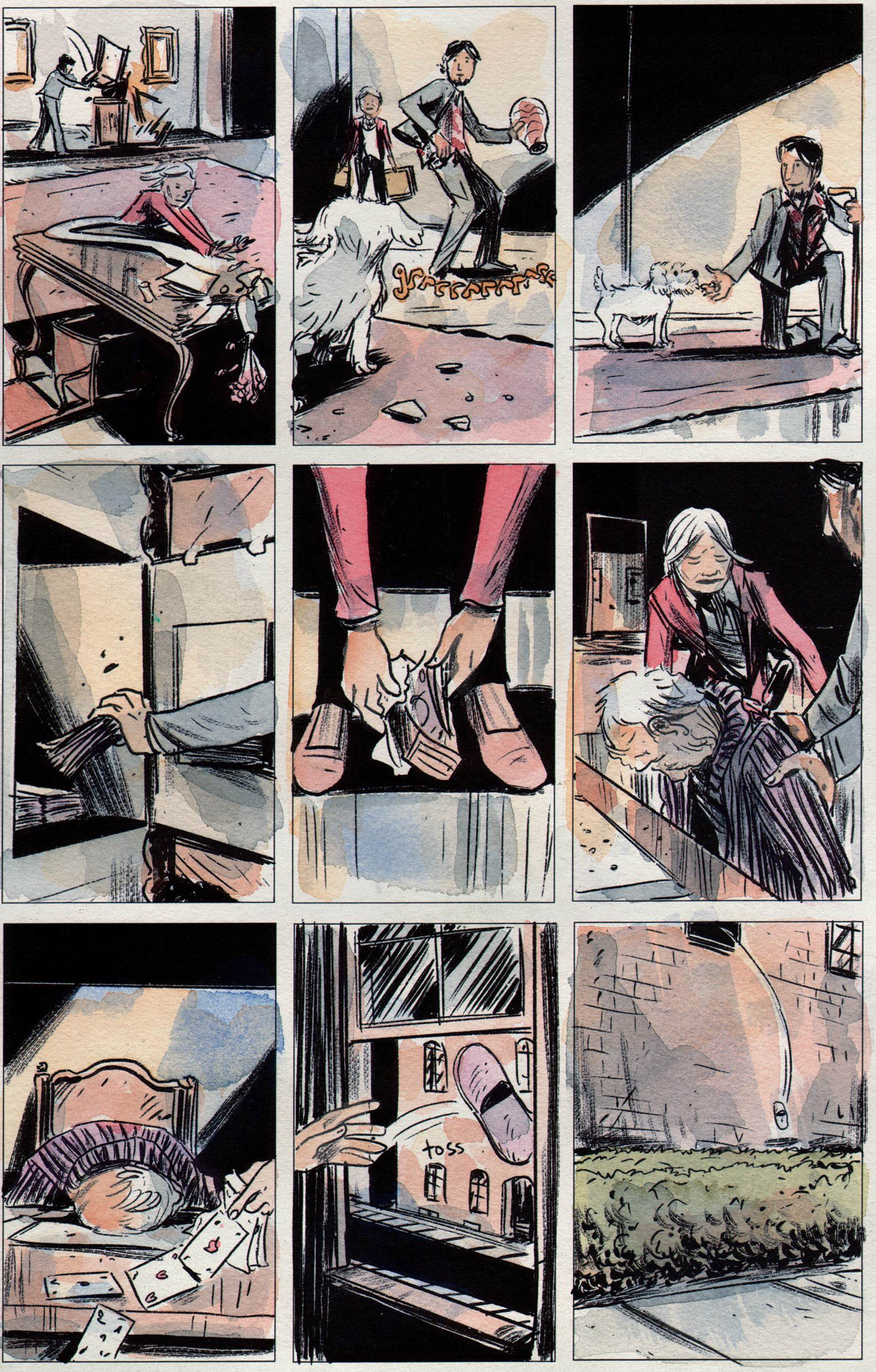

Look. We don't really care about the money.
She just wants her stuffing back.
We don't want to hurt you.
That sounds like a threat.
Well. It kind of is, I guess.
Hmm.

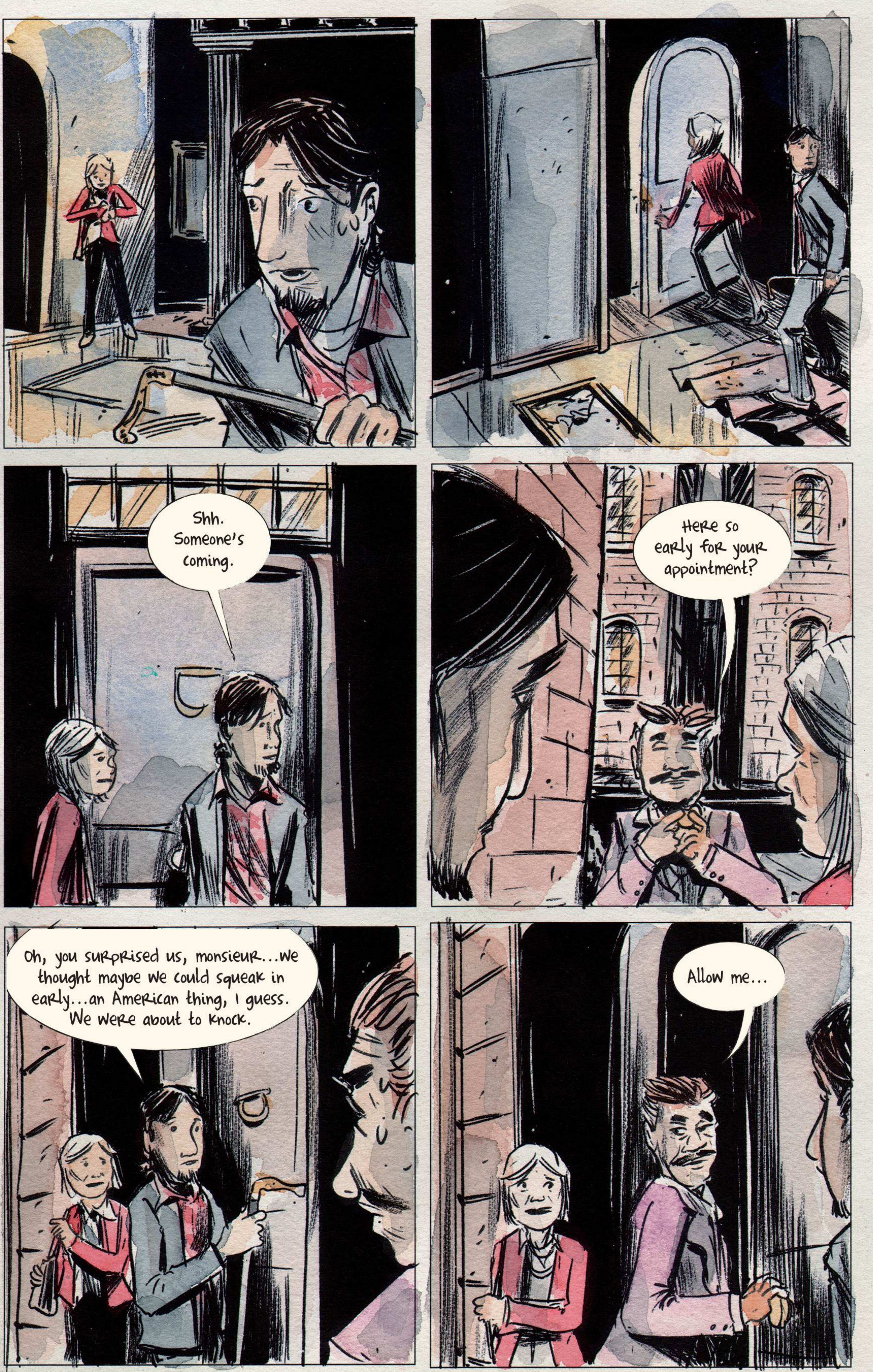

Look. We're not here for trouble. Merry just doesn't want to be taken advantage of. You're taking advantage. Don't lie. She can always tell.
Hm.
The curtain rods, Sam.
What?!
On it.
No!

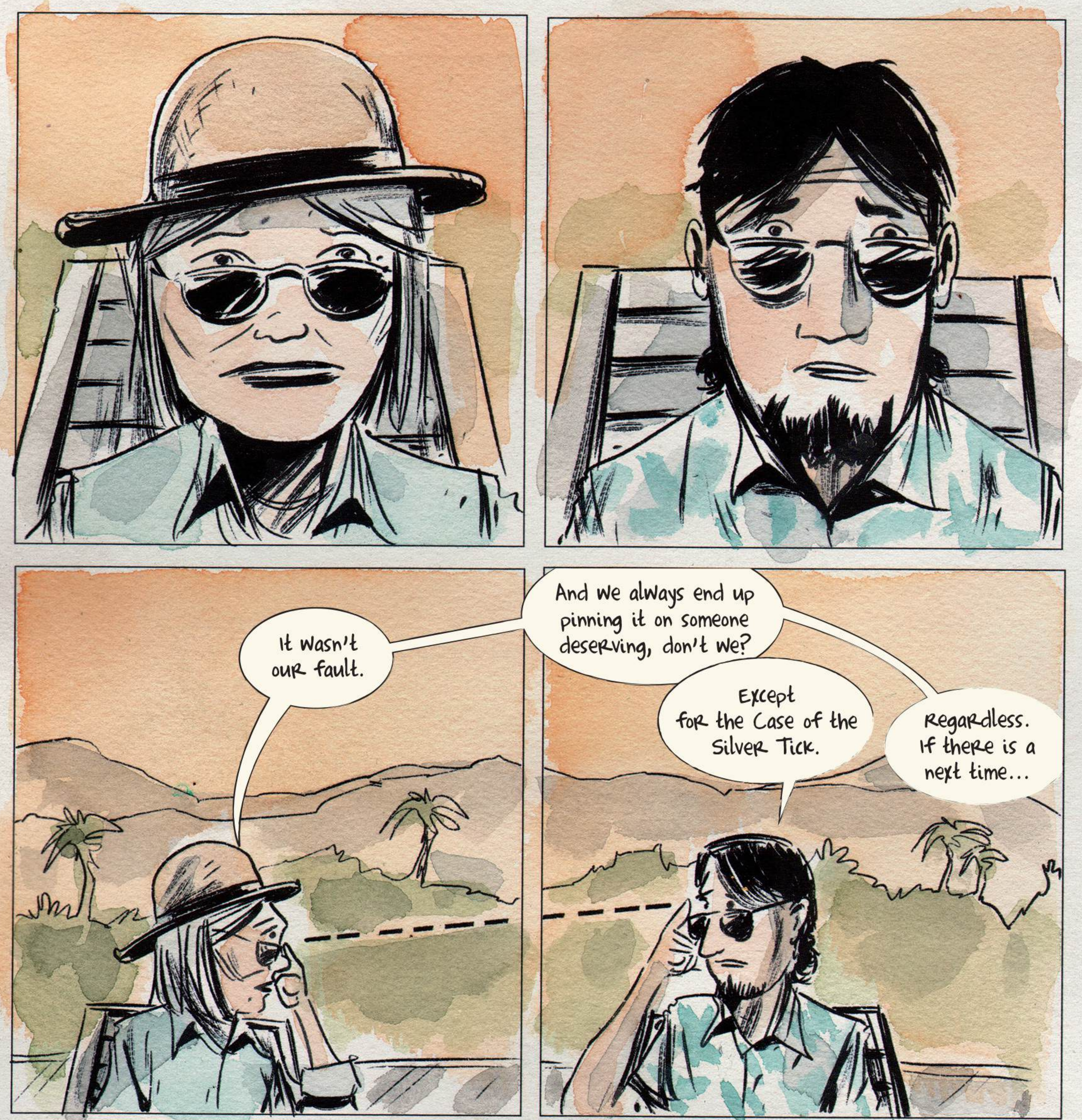

KRUNCH

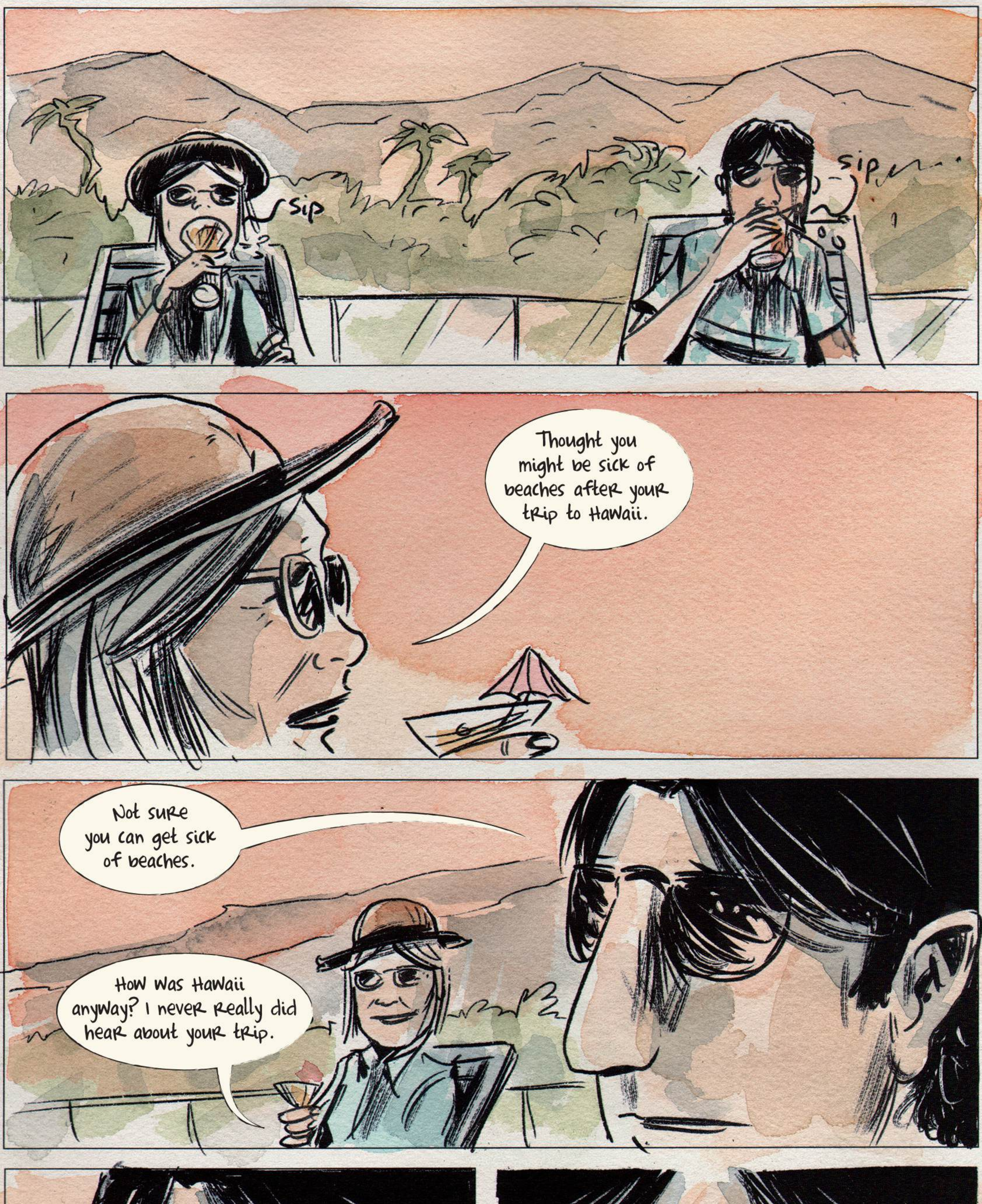
Oh…
Merde.
You saw what happened?
I didn't do anything this time. It was all him. I was so calm.
Never mind that. You know what comes next.
We've got to make it look good.

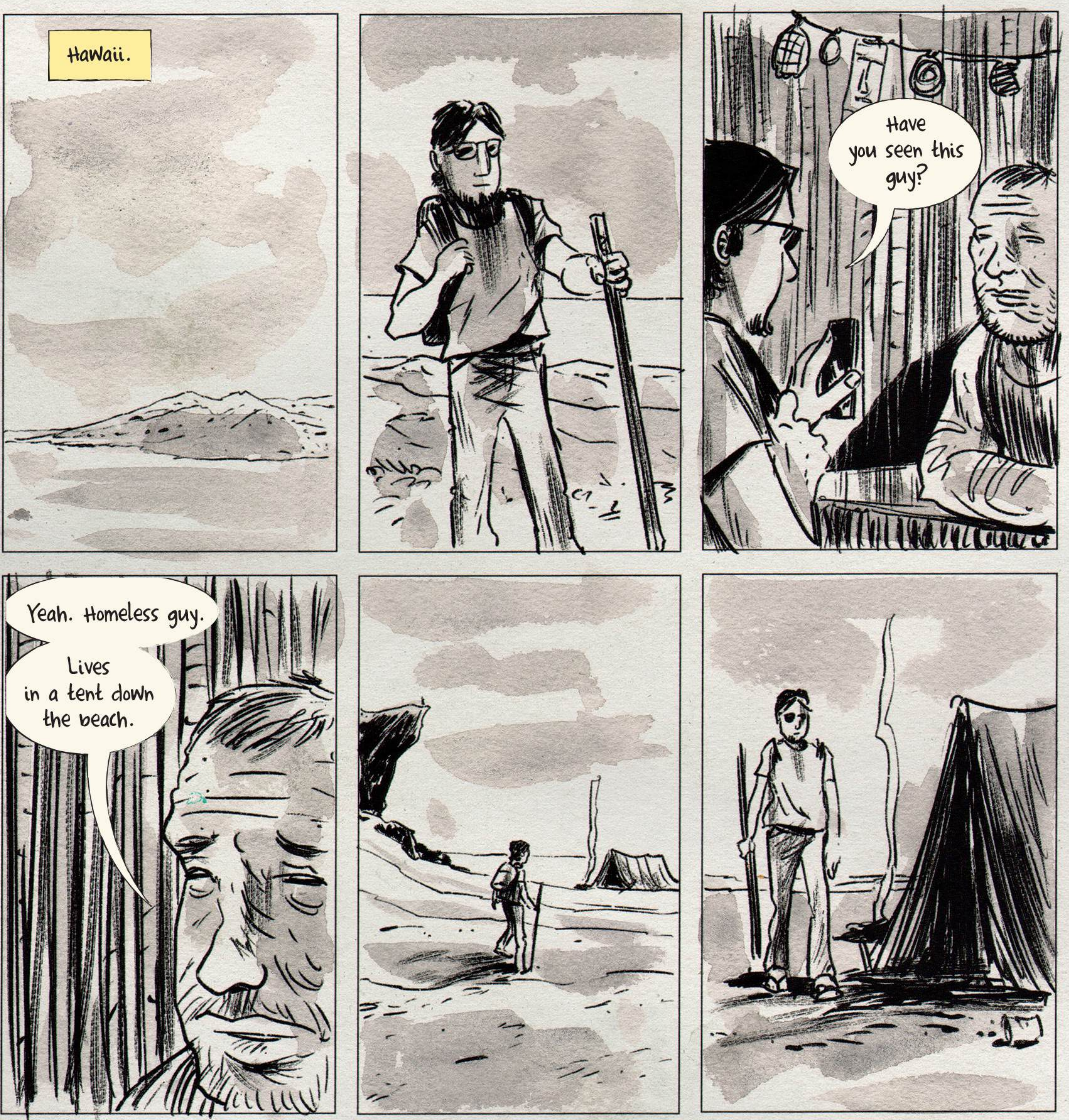

STAB
Toxic in CB
FSHH
Porc Jamb
FSSSHHH


toss

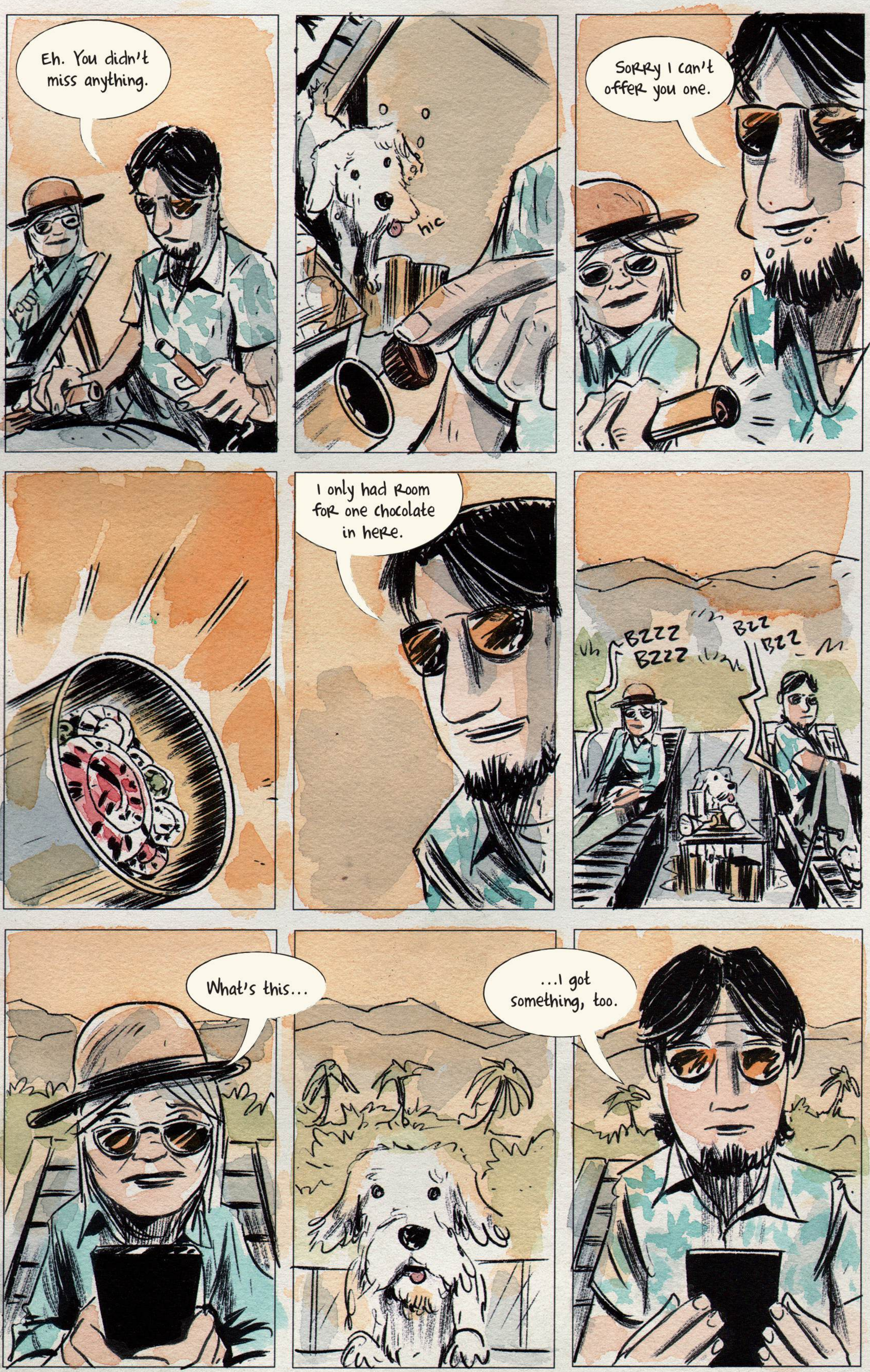

Shh. Someone's coming.
Here so early for your appointment?
Oh, you surprised us, monsieur...We thought maybe we could squeak in early...an American thing, I guess. We were about to knock.
Allow me...

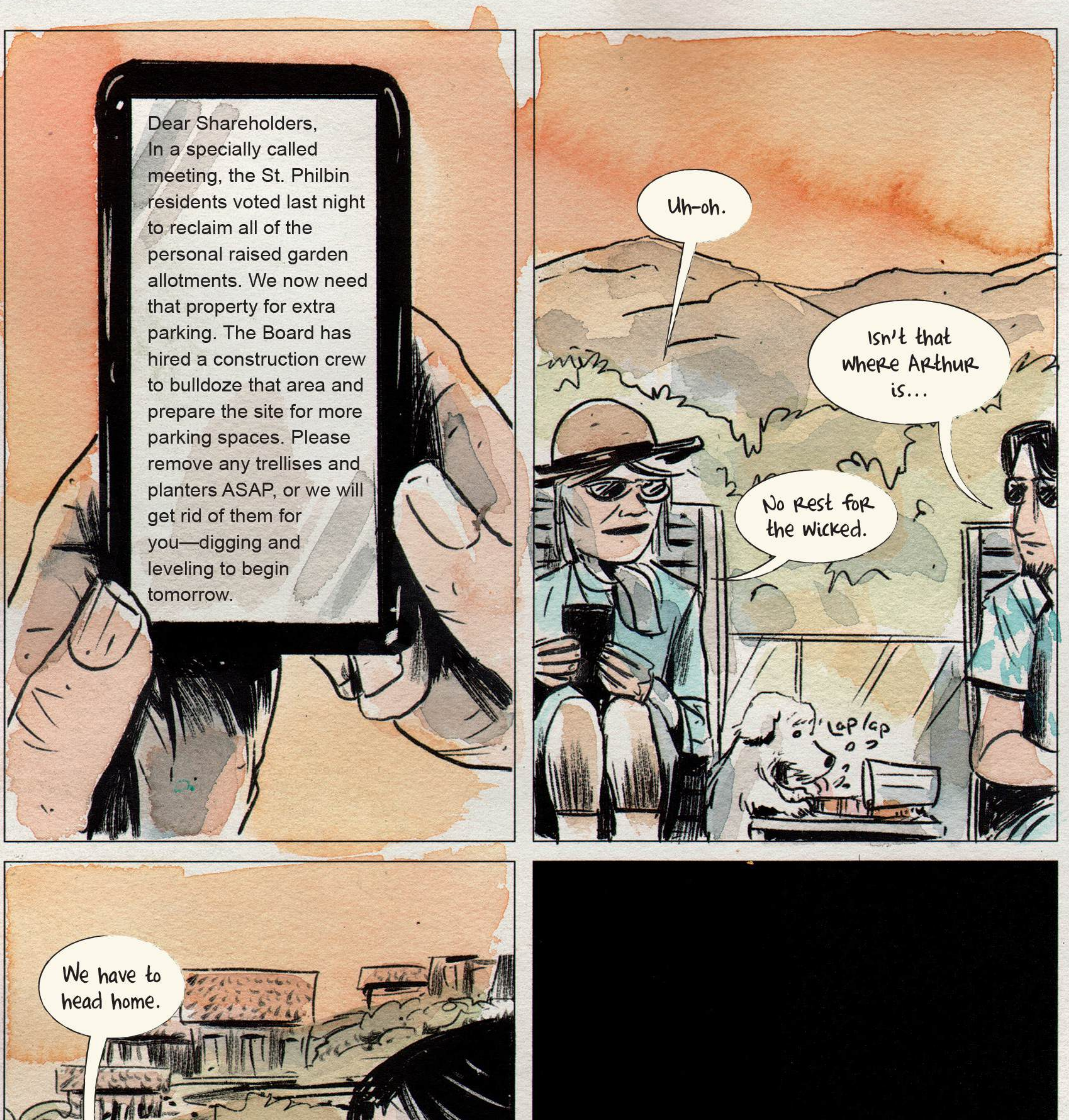

It wasn't our fault.
And we always end up pinning it on someone deserving, don't we?
Except for the Case of the Silver Tick.
Regardless. If there is a next time...
Can you remember that in France the "C" stands for "chaud"? Hot on the faucets.
I'll try. As long as you can stop carrying your puzzles inside your pocket.
By the way, I give up...What is 700 C in CB?
Dear one, I fear there are 700 calories in your crême brûlée.


sip
sip...
Thought you might be sick of beaches after your trip to Hawaii.
Not sure you can get sick of beaches.
How was Hawaii anyway? I never really did hear about your trip.
Hawaii?
It was okay...


Hawaii.
Have you seen this guy?
Yeah. Homeless guy.
Lives in a tent down the beach.

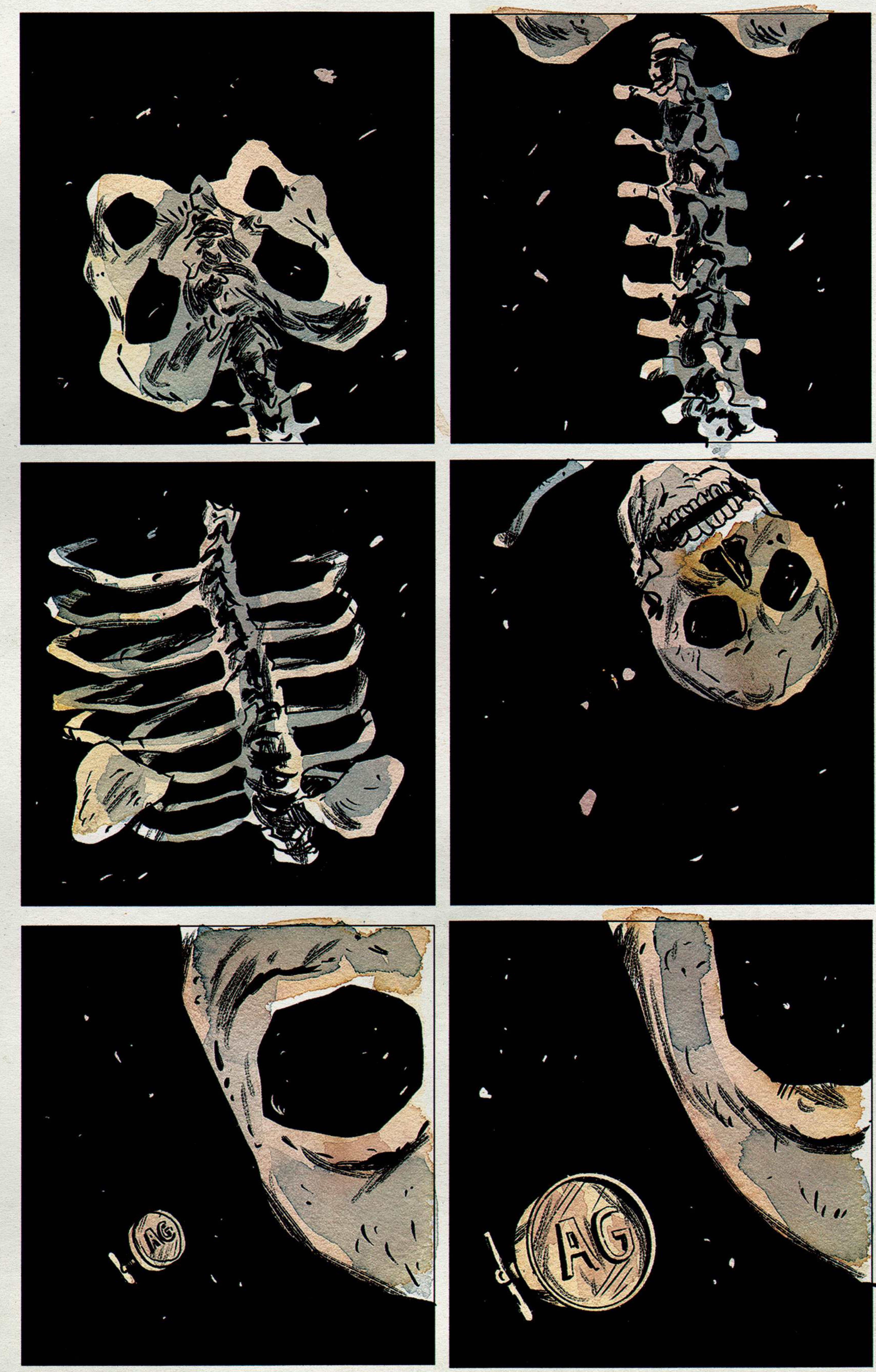
Dad?
What are you doing?
Where have you been?
Just trying to live my life...
Never hurt no-body...
CHUG


Eh. You didn't miss anything.
hic
Sorry I can't offer you one.
I only had room for one chocolate in here.
BZZZ BZZZ
BZZ BZZ
What's this...
...I got something, too.

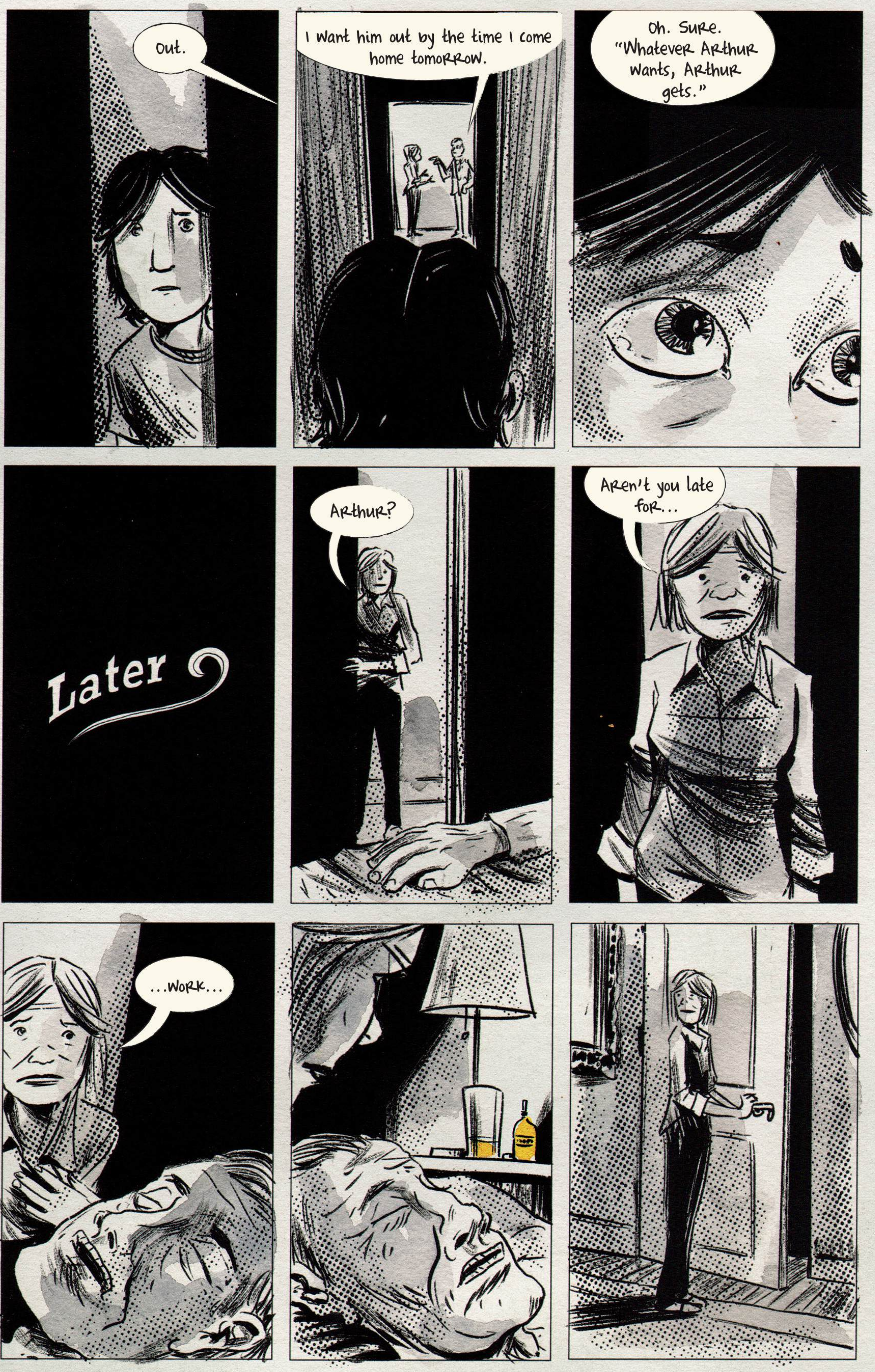


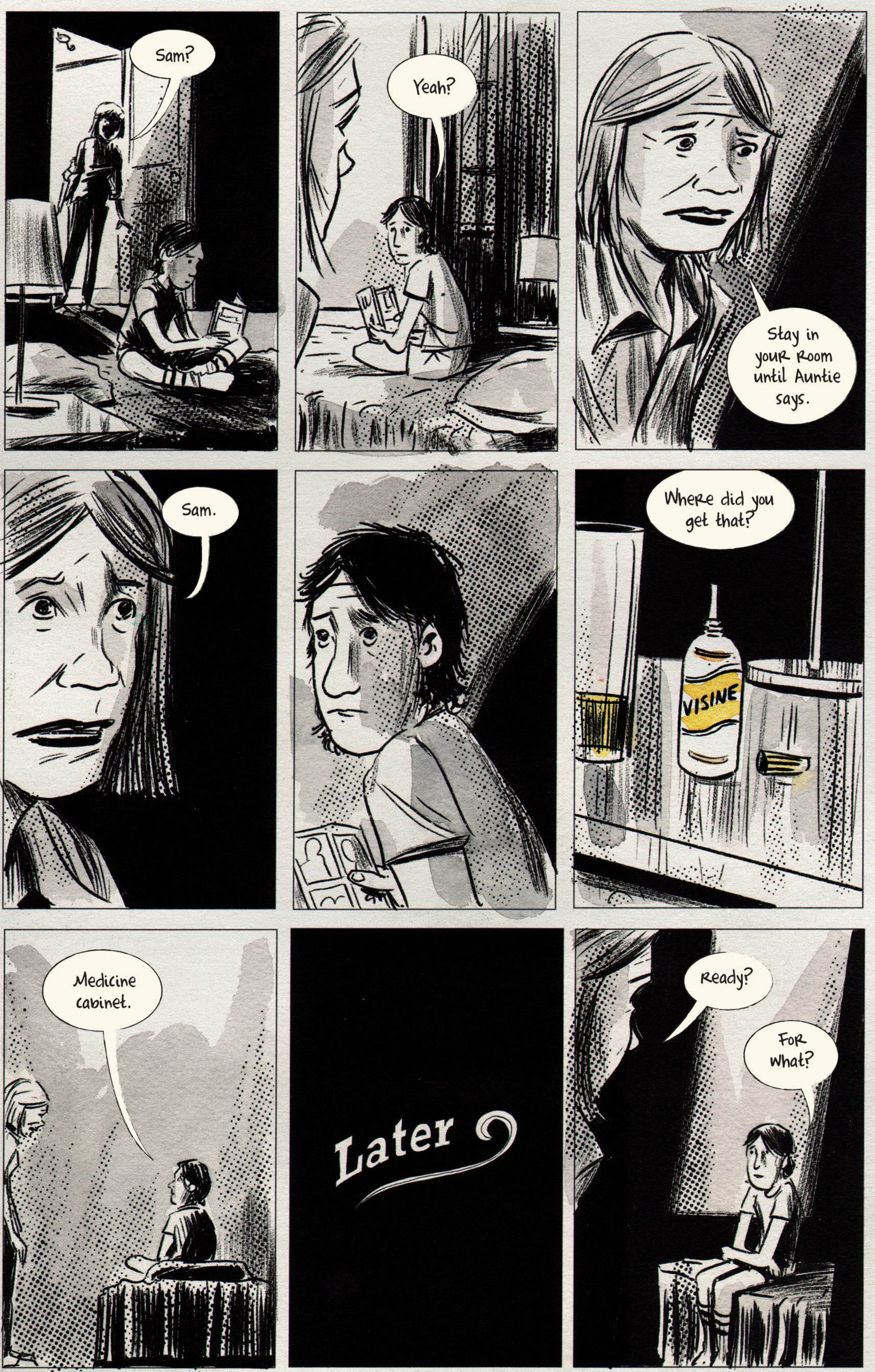
Dear Shareholders,
In a specially called meeting, the St. Philbin residents voted last night to reclaim all of the personal raised garden allotments. We now need that property for extra parking. The Board has hired a construction crew to bulldoze that area and prepare the site for more parking spaces. Please remove any trellises and planters ASAP, or we will get rid of them for you—digging and leveling to begin tomorrow.

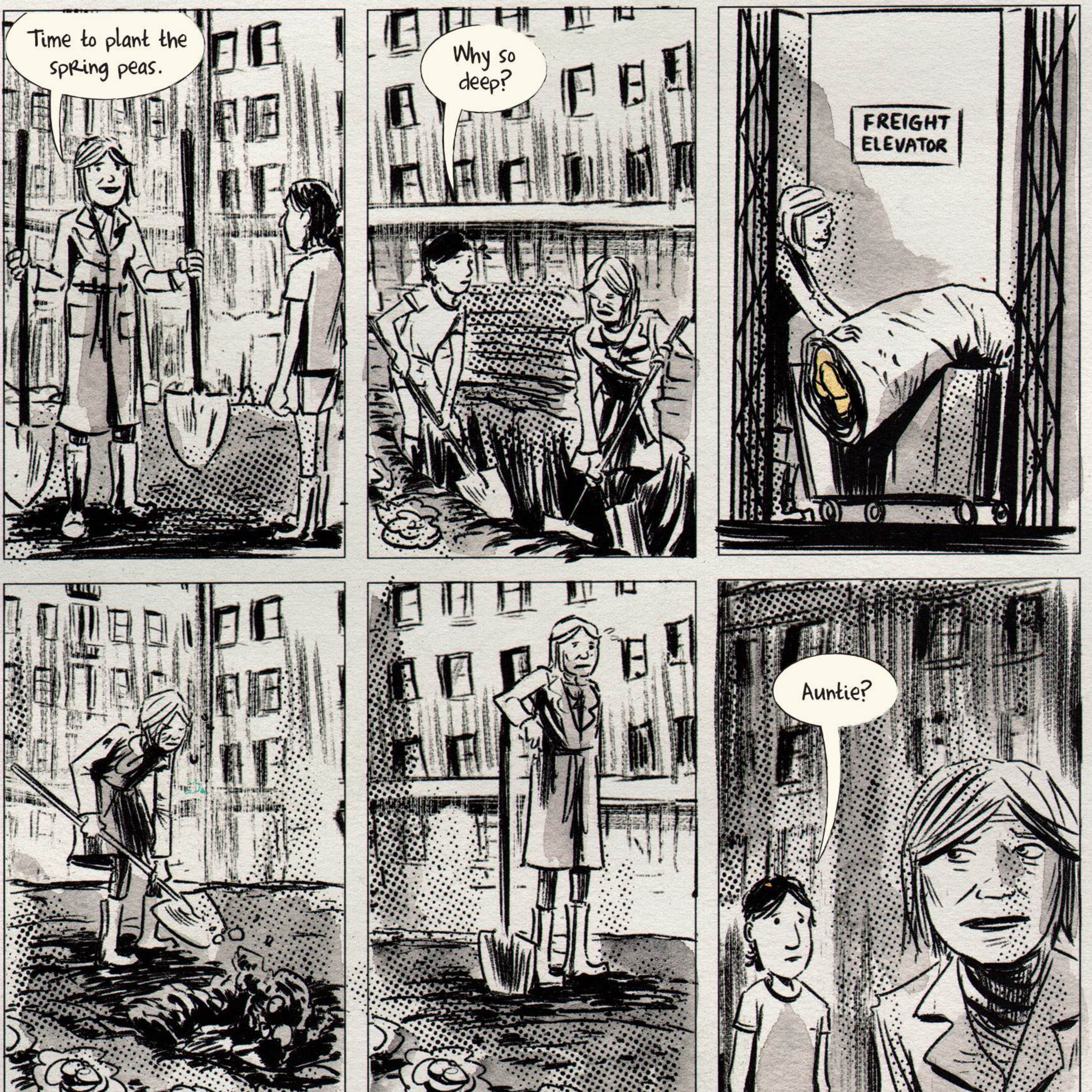
Uh-oh.
Isn't that where Arthur is...
No rest for the wicked.
lap lap
We have to head home.
ASAP.
hic
lap
lap

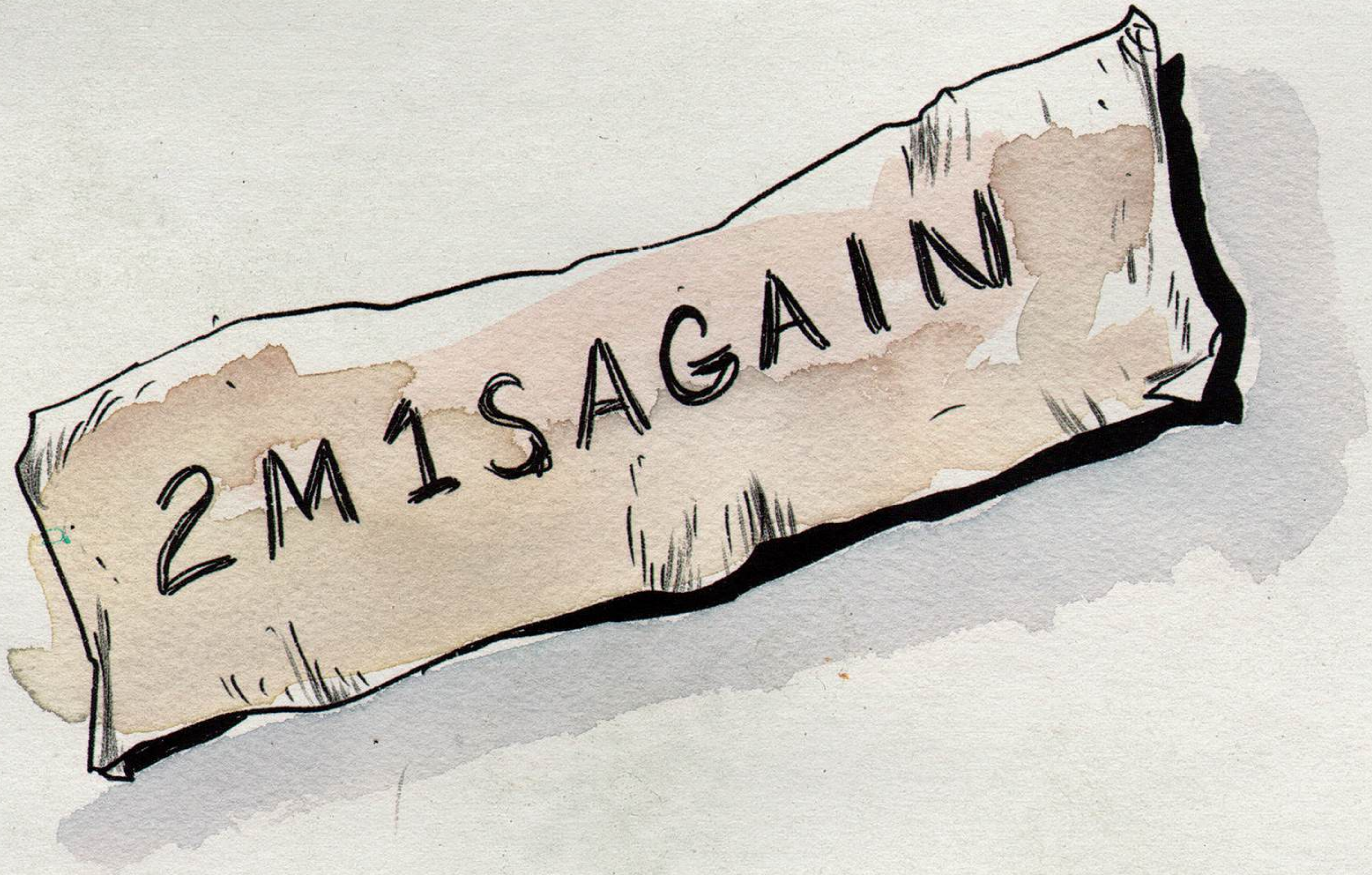

AG
AG

Years Ago

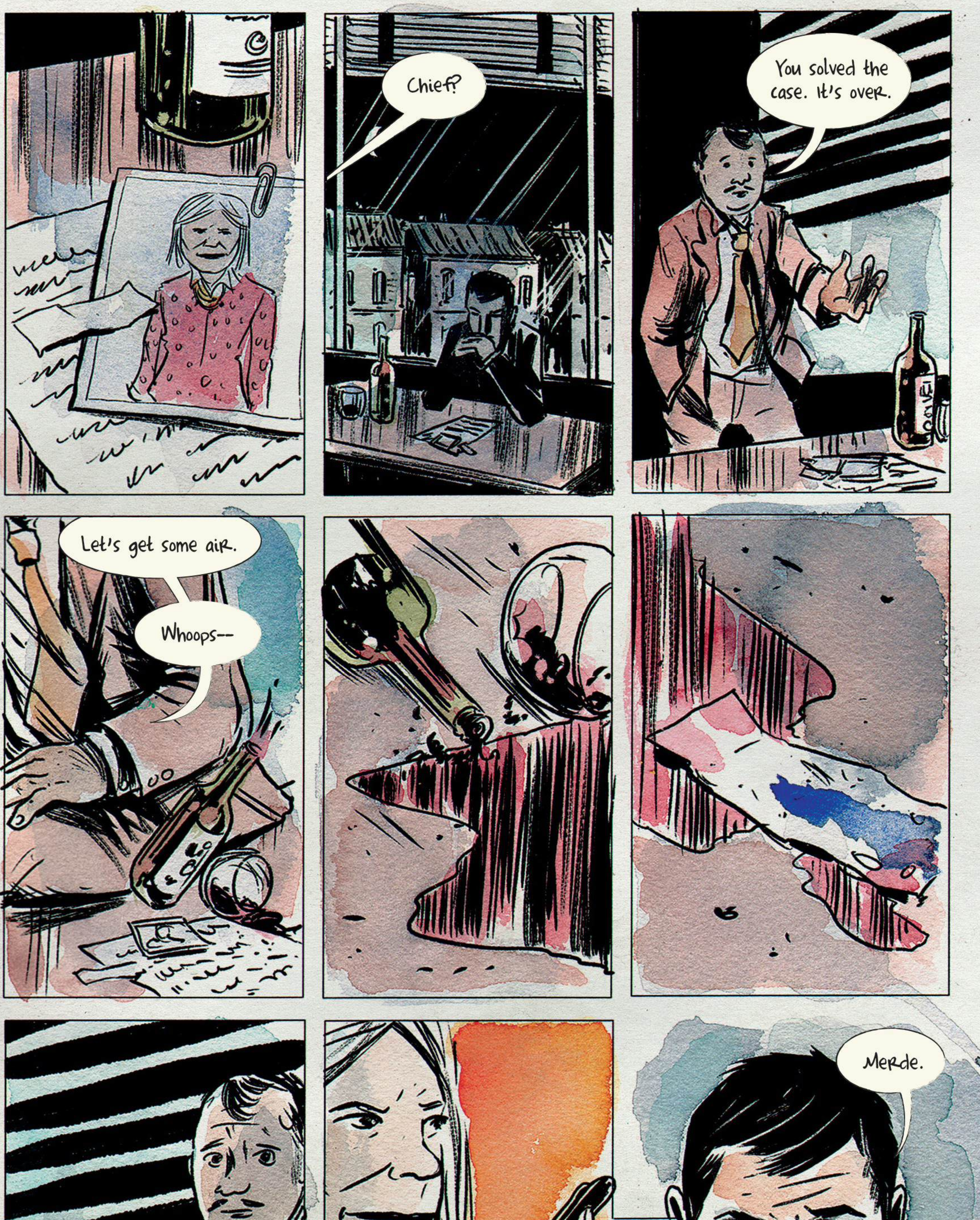

Out.
I want him out by the time I come home tomorrow.
Oh. Sure. "Whatever Arthur wants, Arthur gets."
Later
Arthur?
Aren't you late for...
...work...

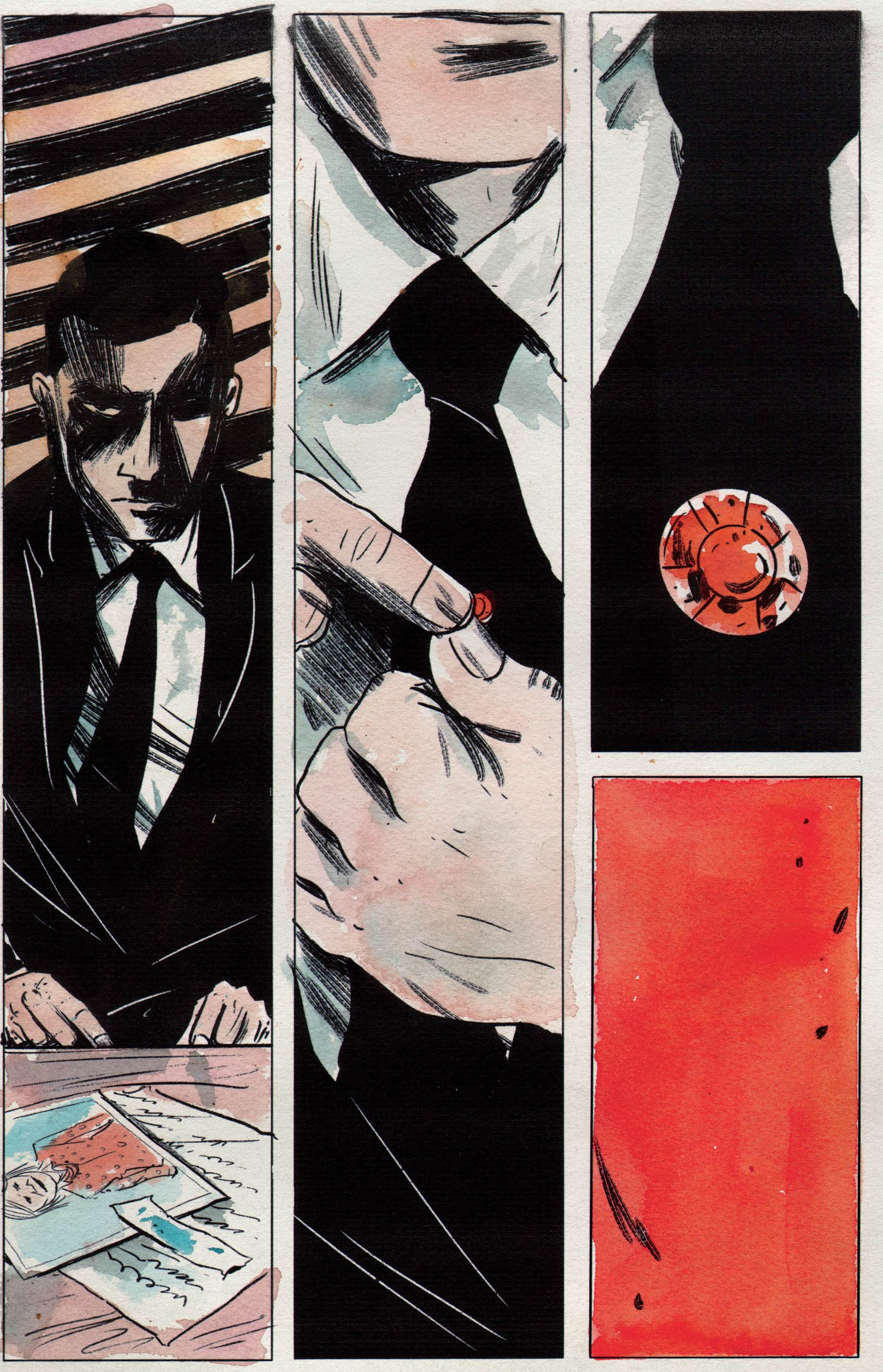

Sam?
Yeah?
Stay in your room until Auntie says.
Sam.
Where did you get that?
VISINE
Medicine cabinet.
Later
Ready?
For what?


Time to plant the spring peas.
Why so deep?
FREIGHT ELEVATOR
Auntie?
I didn't want to leave.
Am I in trouble?
No, Sam.
Not while Auntie is here.



2M1SAGAIN

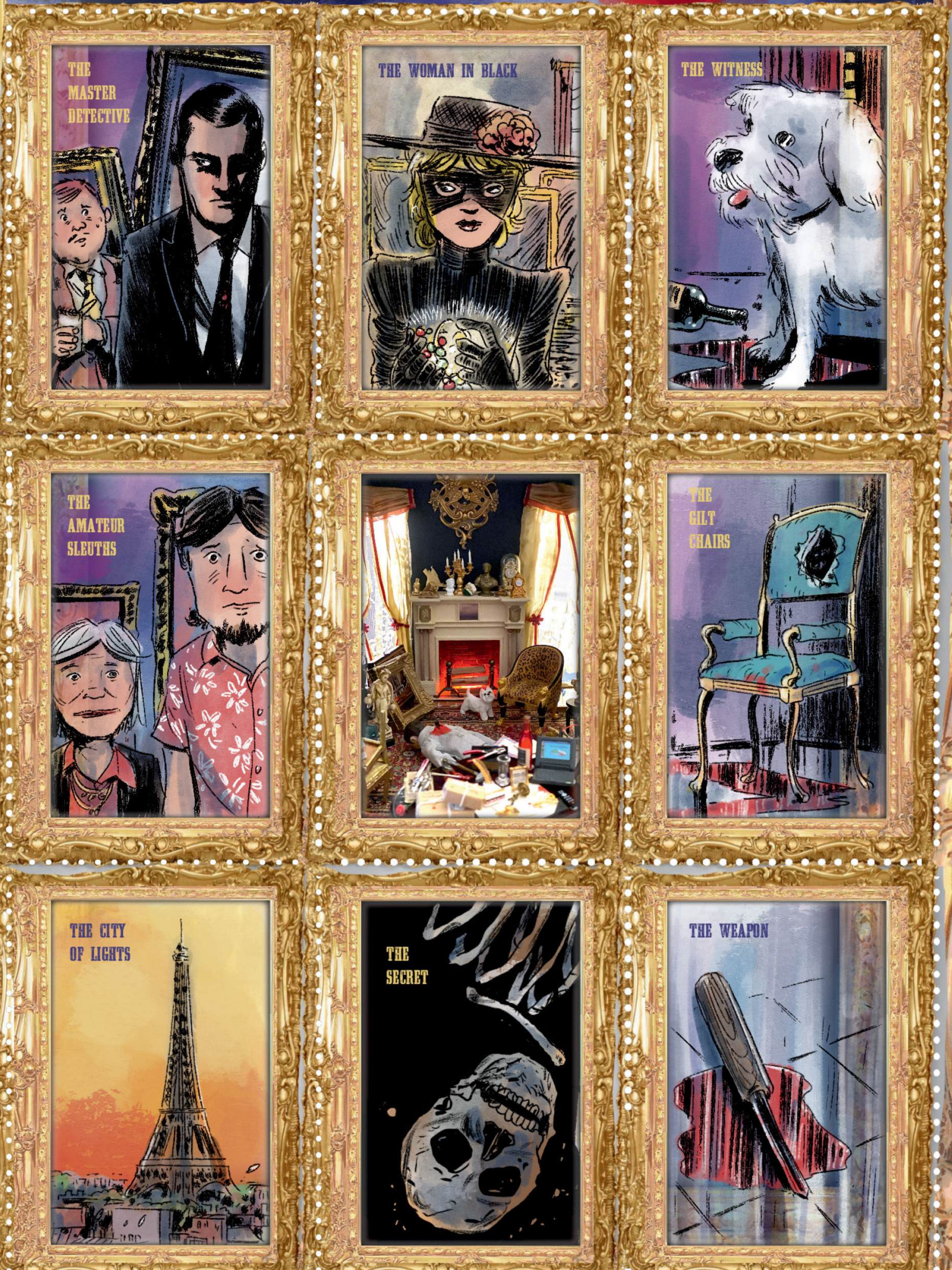

Chief?
You solved the case. It's over.
Let's get some air.
Whoops--
700 C in CB
Merde.



Margie
Kraft
Kindt

GILT FRAME

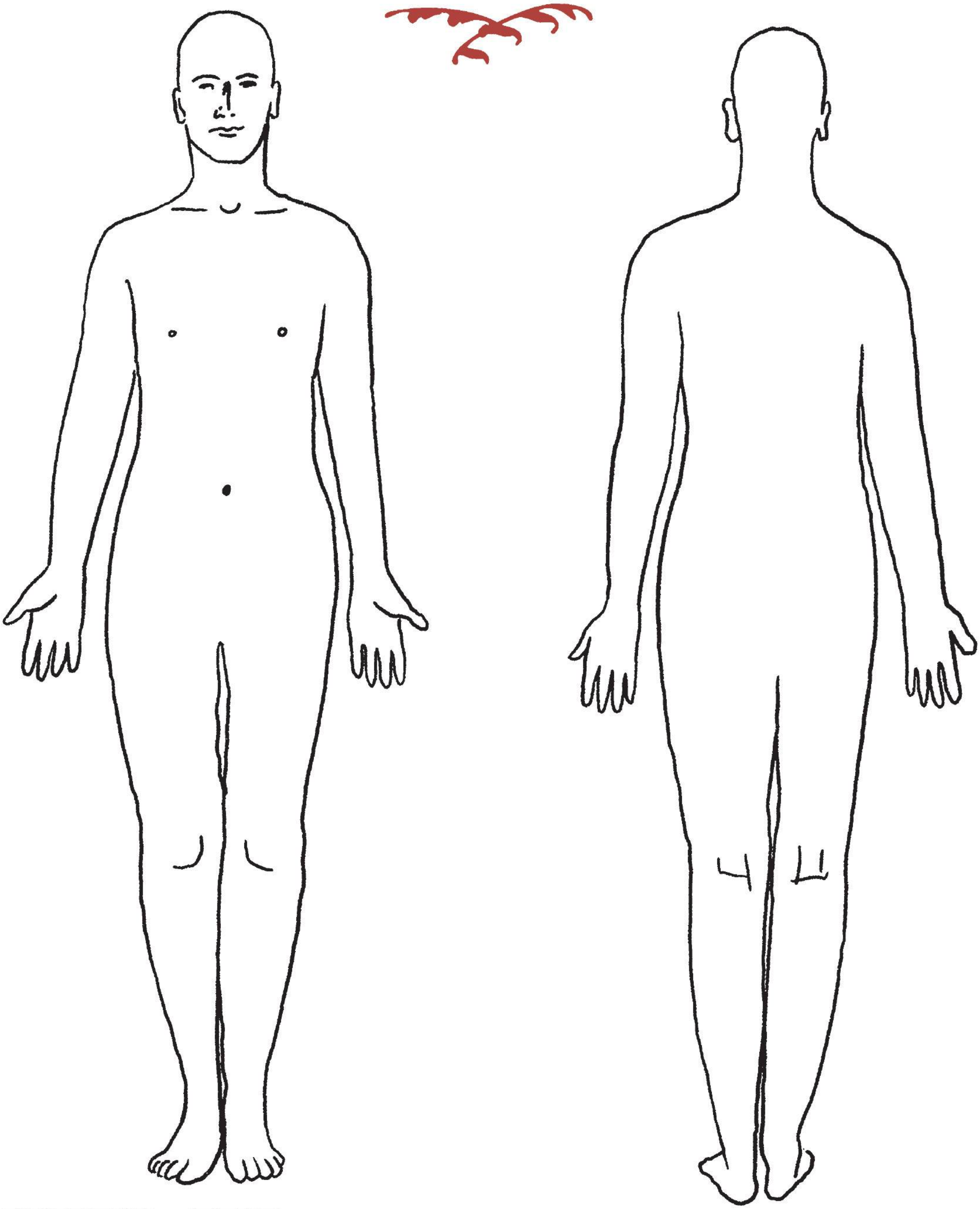
Matt
Kindt


THE MASTER DETECTIVE
THE WOMAN IN BLACK
THE WITNESS
THE AMATEUR SLEUTHS
THE GILT CHAIRS
THE CITY OF LIGHTS
THE SECRET
THE WEAPON

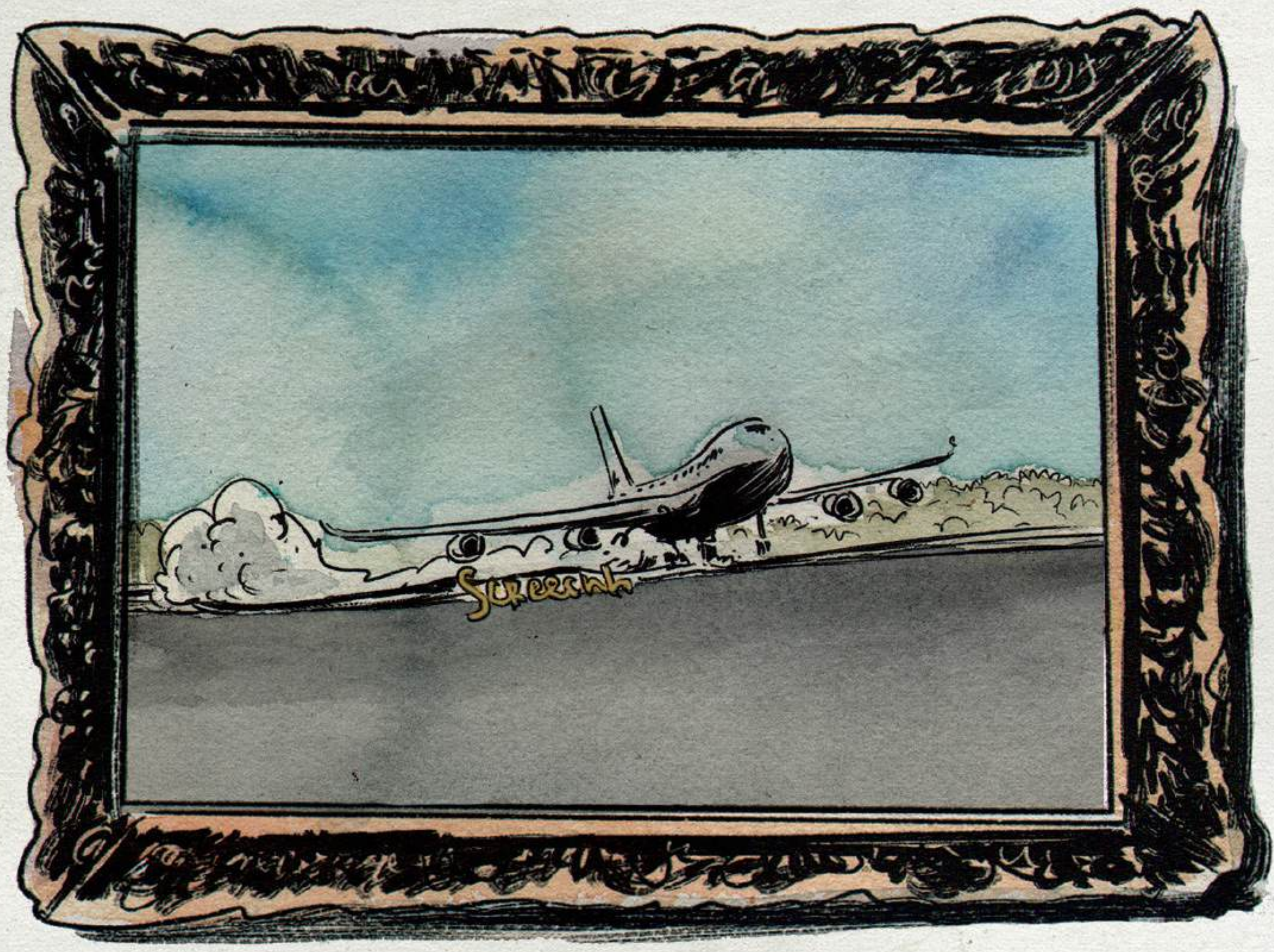
Gilt Frame #1 Convention Exclusive Cover

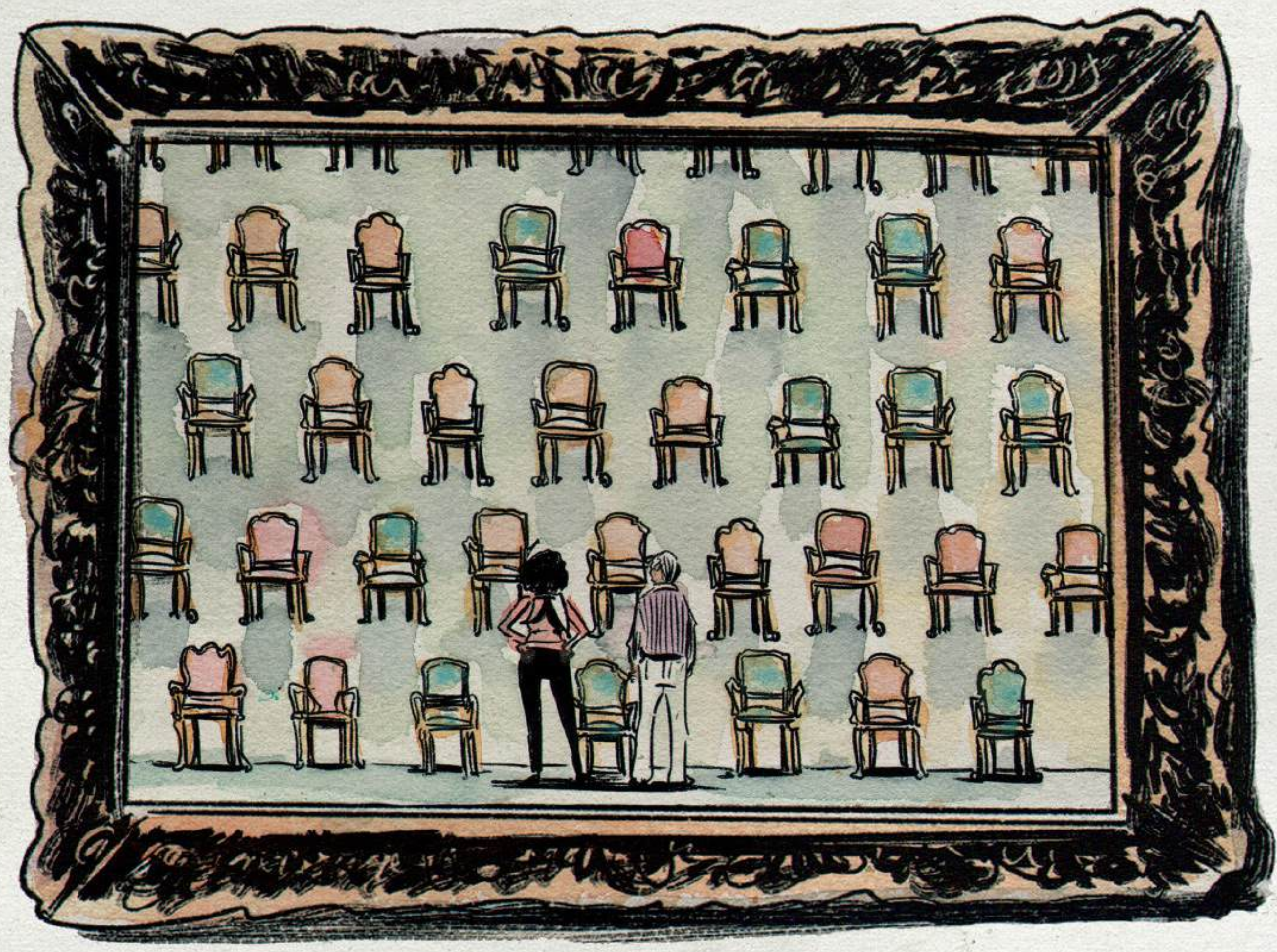
Page Count:	Issue Number:
Staples:	Name:
Cost:	Examiner:

GILT FRAME



Section: Pathology	**Authorized by: DA Mike Richardson**
Form Title: Autopsy Diagram - Mystery/Fiction/Thriller/Comedy	**Form No.: FIB 001**
Rev.:	**Rev. date. 9/3/24**


Screech



A CLASSIC WHODUNIT MURDER MYSTERY THAT SPANS THE GLOBE FROM PARIS TO HAWAII TO MONTENEGRO IN AN ATTEMPT TO KEEP UP WITH THE MOST UNLIKELY MURDER-SOLVING DUO IN THE HISTORY OF MURDER SOLVERS.

Sam, who is in his early twenties, is an orphan, taken in when he was younger by his well-off Aunt Merry, who has eccentric tastes in antiques and travel.

Together, Sam and Merry have solved some of the most notorious murders in the world. And true to form, their Parisian vacation is cut short when they stumble upon a murder scene so bizarre that only a raging psychopath could have produced it.

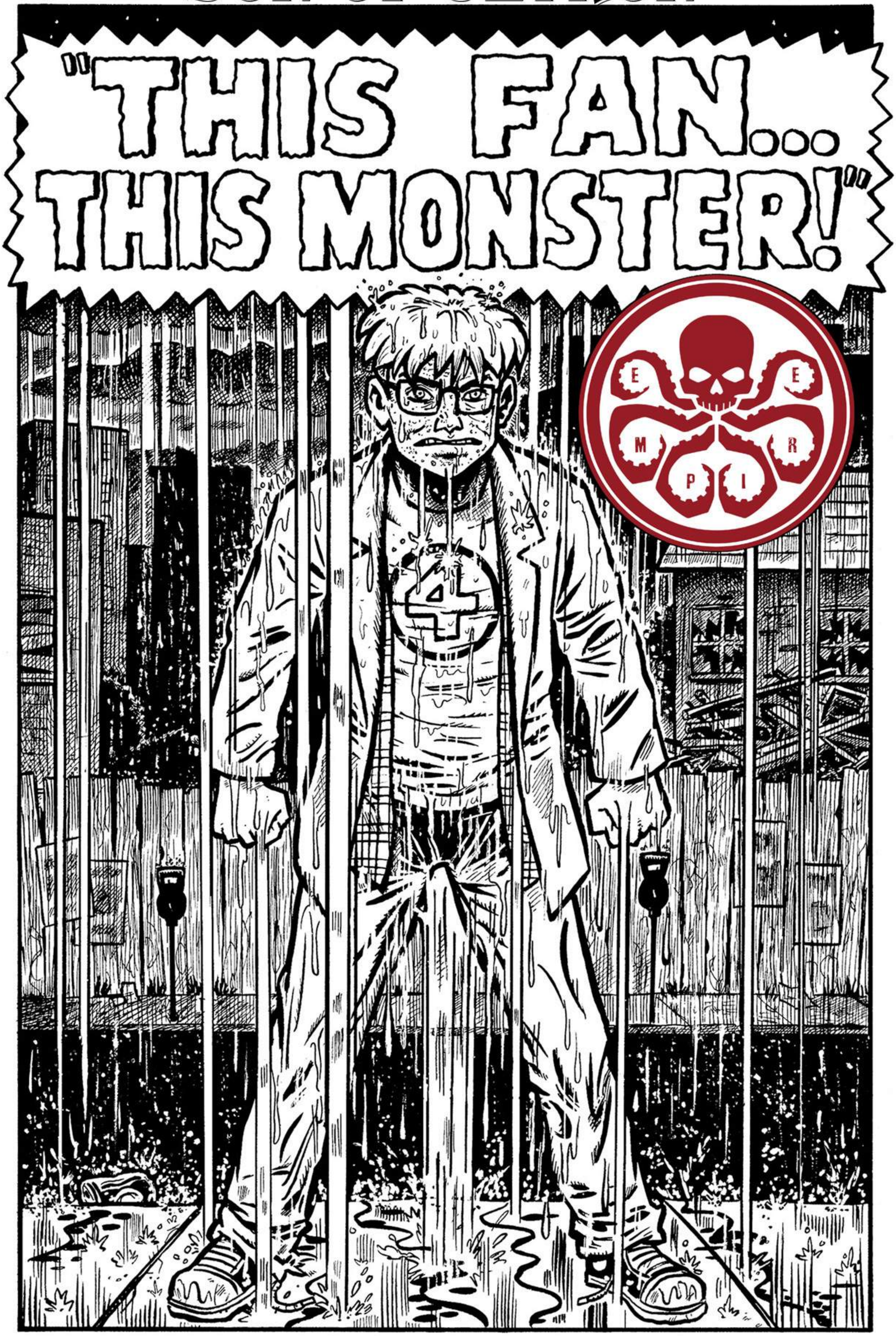
But to solve the crime, they have to wrestle with jewel thieves, art forgers, gunrunners, a lost puppy, and a master French detective who may just solve the crime before they do.

Collects issues #1–#3 of *Gilt Frame*.

DARK HORSE BOOKS

FLUX HOUSE

SON OF ULTRON


"THIS FAN... THIS MONSTER!"